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SPORT IN ASIA AND AFRICA

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ALLERTON LANE

THE AUTHOR—A SNAPSHOT IN EAST AFRICA IN 1910.

[*Frontispiece*

SPORT IN ASIA AND AFRICA

BY
SIR RICHARD DANE, K.C.I.E.

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PREFACE

In December 1918, after five and a half years of most strenuous work in China, I found myself once more an idle man; and, to employ my unaccustomed leisure and beguile the tedium of the long journey from China to England, I wrote an account of some of my shooting and fishing experiences and adventures. With the exception of some notes regarding the dates of my shooting expeditions, and the notes about bears, which are referred to in Chapter IX, I kept no shooting diaries or notes, but I have consulted the diaries of my friend Mr. W. B. M. Bird, and my memory is very retentive. I think, therefore, that I can vouch for the substantial accuracy of all statements made, and for the complete accuracy of the description given of the more important incidents. Some of the actual dates given have been taken from Mr. Bird's diaries, and some from entries on the shields upon which trophies have been mounted.

With the exception of two or three stories, which have been introduced, the experiences and adventures narrated are those in which I actually took part, and I therefore make no apology for the continued use of the personal pronoun. Opinions may differ on the point, but those books about sport, in which the author

relates his own personal experiences, have always appeared to me to be the most interesting; provided, of course, that the narrative bears the stamp of truth, and that failures as well as successes are faithfully recorded.

The book has been written partly in the hope that it may be of interest to some readers, and partly with the object of placing the events narrated on record before my recollection of them becomes dim—*Olim meminisse juvabit.*

I do not pretend to have ever been a good shikari. I began big-game shooting too late in life to become an expert in the business; and I am not specially observant, and was handicapped to some extent by deafness. In forest hunting, good hearing is almost as important as good sight. I was, however, a fairly good rifle shot, especially at stationary objects, and was a good walker and had a considerable amount of endurance and pretty good nerves. My native hunters, whether they were Indians, Africans, or Chinese, have usually worked well for me; and I was fully conscious of my own limitations, and was not too proud to obtain help from others to make good my own deficiencies. With these qualifications, I managed to have some very good sport, to secure some fine trophies, and to come unscathed through some fairly exciting adventures.

If a perusal of the book gives to any of my readers a tithe of the pleasure which some of the experiences have given to me I shall not have written in vain.

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SPORT IN ASIA AND AFRICA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

In my youth I shot urial (mountain sheep) in the Jhelum district of the Punjab, but it was not until 1899, when I was forty-four years of age, that I had either the time or the opportunity for big-game shooting. I lived, however, in hope. In 1879 my right eye was badly injured in a polo accident, and I taught myself to shoot from the left shoulder in the hope that some day the chance of using a rifle might fall to my lot. I should have probably been a better shot at birds than I am if I had continued to shoot from the right shoulder and used a gun with a bent stock, but I succeeded in learning to shoot very fairly well with a rifle.

As a boy my imagination was fired by the lion stories of Gordon Cumming and of Jules Gerard ; and when, after my appointment as Commissioner of Northern Indian Salt Revenue in December 1898, the time for big-game shooting did come, my first desire was to shoot tigers. The Jemadar of the office, Mihtab Khan, was a genuine enthusiast for this form of sport. He was a most useful man on a fishing expedition, as he was

very clever in manipulating steel wire, and could handle a fish, when brought to the bank, dexterously enough; but, except that he was very fond of fish to eat, it was plain that he considered any time devoted to fishing misspent. The pursuit of a tiger or a panther was, in his eyes, the most suitable recreation for a gentleman; and, if my inclinations required any stimulus, he was invariably ready to supply it.

Later on, when I had had more experience, I found that stalking the buffalo and the bison, or still-hunting in the forests of the Central Provinces, with the possibility of an encounter with some dangerous animal, had superior attractions; but, for some years after I began big-game shooting, my attention was almost entirely given to the pursuit of tigers and panthers. My luck with these animals was not particularly good. I cannot claim to have shot more than thirteen tigers and four panthers, and I made several blunders in my encounters with the former—more, I think, than I made in my encounters with other animals. Eight of the tigers, however, I killed outright myself, five of them with a single shot for each, and I successfully followed up on foot and retrieved two wounded tigers single-handed; so that my record is not altogether an inglorious one.

I have heard an officer with good judgment say that, in his opinion, tiger-shooting was a very much overrated sport. It is true that there may be very little excitement about the death of a tiger, and the sport is frequently followed in the hot weather and under uncomfort-

able conditions. After days or perhaps weeks of watchful waiting, you find yourself in a *machan*, or platform, constructed in a tree, with the sun beating hot upon your head. Sitting absolutely motionless in the heat induces drowsiness, and, while you are struggling against sleep and wondering whether the tiger is really in the beat, a shot rings out, and then there is silence. All is over, and the only thing for you to do is to go and see the dead tiger, congratulate the lucky sportsman, and wonder whether the game has really been worth the candle. In a well-managed beat it frequently happens that the only sportsman who sees the tiger is the one who shoots him; and, if the beat is arranged by experts and the sportsmen are good shots, a single shot very often finishes the business. If the tiger is only wounded and a follow is necessary, the game becomes exciting and dangerous enough to satisfy anyone; and a beat, when the tiger's line of retreat has been incorrectly judged, and he begins roaring and trying to break out through the Stops, is also very exciting. Much of the tiger-shooting, however, which is done from machans is undoubtedly tame work, and, unless the sportsman follows up the wounded animal himself, it is no more dangerous than partridge-driving.

A tiger-shoot with elephants is more diverting, as there is more to keep you interested and amused. The elephants are a constant source of interest, either in the camp or in the beat; and it is a fine sight, when the mahouts, or drivers, know that they have a tiger before them, to watch the elephants crashing through the jungle shoulder to shoulder,

breaking trees in their progress, so that the line may be maintained.

In this game more appears to me to depend upon the elephant than upon the man. Staunchness is, of course, the most necessary qualification, but it is almost equally important to have an elephant which is active and can move rapidly from one point to another. On two occasions, when I shot in the Nepal Terai with friends, I was fortunate enough to get the loan of a splendid female shooting-elephant, named Chainchal, which belonged to the Rana of Bhinga; and on both of these occasions I gave a very good account of myself. On other occasions, when the elephant I had was unreliable, I was unsuccessful.

A drawback which attaches to tiger-shooting in parties is the scheming of the Indian shikaris to get the shot for some sportsman they favour, either because he is a local magnate or because they hope to receive a liberal reward from him. If the man favoured by the shikari is sitting on one side of the beat, the shoulder of the beat, on the other side, is thrown forward, and the tiger is in this way induced to advance in the direction of the favoured gun. It is wonderful how a beat can be manipulated by an experienced shikari. If the business is overdone the tiger breaks out on the flank before coming up to the guns. I have, more than once, seen a tiger lost in this way, which might easily have been bagged; and the scheming, whether successful or unsuccessful, is a cause of annoyance.

The mortification of failure in a tiger-shoot transcends also, in my opinion, the pleasure of

MIHTAB KHAN AND CHAINCHAL.

LANE

success. More than once, when I had made a mess of things, I resolved to leave the pursuit to others; but, like Omar Khayyám, "Repentance oft I swore; I swore, but was I sober when I swore?"; and the discovery of fresh tracks, or an invitation to join an expedition with the chance of a tiger, were too much for my resolutions.

Sitting up at night over a kill for a tiger is considered by some people to be poaching and unsportsmanlike, but I entirely disagree with this view. It will generally be found that the people who condemn this form of sport admit, upon cross-examination, that when they have sat up nothing has come. They had not, probably, the patience and the fortitude—and very considerable fortitude is often required—to sit quiet enough. I heard some native shikaris, on one occasion, discussing the merits of a deceased Indian gentleman. "Kaisa machan ka baithnewala tha!" (And what a sitter he was in a machan!) said one. The remark made me laugh at the time, but there are unquestionably just as many grades of sitters in a machan as there are grades of trackers, or of rifle-shots.

I had not much fortune when sitting up either for tigers or panthers; but, in my opinion, it is fine sport, and the man who, by sitting motionless for hours, outwits and shoots a tiger in this way, in entitled to far more credit than a sportsman who is led up to a machan in a beat arranged by someone else, and then kills a tiger by a shot at a few yards' distance. Certainly some of the most interesting and exciting experiences I have had when tiger or panther shooting have been in a

machan sitting up over a kill, though, as above said, my successes were few and my failures were many. Good hearing and the ability to see in the dark are important qualifications for success in this form of sport; and in both of these qualifications I was deficient.

It is certainly very trying to sit up all night, but to sit for four or five hours is very enjoyable; and in the Central Provinces the plucky little aborigines are always ready to come and help you down at any hour you may appoint. The shikari in the districts in the United Provinces, which lie along the edge of the Terai, is, so far as my experience goes, a coward, and is afraid even to visit a kill except on the back of an elephant.

I have shot in India good specimens of tiger, panther, bear, buffalo, gaur or bison, and also good sambur, swamp-deer, barasingh and chital stags and good black buck, nilgai, four-horned antelope, and kakar, or barking deer, but I was not fortunate enough to secure any trophy in India which was out of the common. All the heads in the illustrations were, however, obtained either by fair stalking or by good shooting in chance encounters, when I was still-hunting in the forests in the early morning or the late evening. I got some good heads whilst still-hunting in the Central Provinces, but it must be confessed that I also shot a good many chital and sambur stags which ought to have been spared. It is difficult in this kind of shooting to pick your head: you must shoot at once, or the animal vanishes.

I had some fine sport in Indi , but my best

WAITING FOR A SHOT IN A BEAT WITH ELEPHANTS.

shooting was in East Africa, and the two expeditions which I made to that country are described at some length. In Africa my fortune was good, and I succeeded in shooting there some very fine antelope-heads.

Africa was the country to which my youthful fancy turned, and Africa still possesses a wonderful fascination for me. I had made all arrangements to spend a whole year in the country, and to shoot both in North-West Rhodesia and in Uganda, when the Chinese requested me to assist them to reorganise their salt revenue administration. I gave up my projected expedition with much regret, and doubt if I should have agreed to give it up if my brother had not brought strong pressure to bear upon me.

While I succeeded in bagging most of the game which is to be shot in the plains of India, I had no luck with the red dog. On more than one occasion I had a difficult shot at one, but was invariably unsuccessful. I have seen a good-sized boar with tusks which had been killed by these dogs, and from the tracks it did not appear that more than three or four dogs had taken part in the attack. On one occasion, while I was fishing in the Patli Dun, some hillmen informed my servants that they had seen a small tigress at bay against a rock, surrounded by dogs.

On one occasion I was actually stalked by two dogs which mistook me for some animal. I was still-hunting in the evening with two natives along the edge of a clearing in the Balaghat district, and two young sambur came gambolling out from the jungle not far from us. We squatted

in the grass, unseen by the sambur, and then a peacock, from the top of a sal-tree in the vicinity, began calling. It was a most unmistakable warning; and the little sambur at once began looking in every direction for danger. They failed, however, to detect us, and after a time they moved on; but the playfulness was gone, and they were evidently serious and frightened. We also got up and went on, and almost immediately saw a red dog. I sat down in the grass; and, as I did so, a fine dog joined the other, which appeared to be a bitch. They soon caught sight of me, and, while the bitch walked to the rear, the dog came towards me, bounding over the grass. When he was about 40 yards from me he saw his mistake, and with a startled growl he turned and bolted. The bitch was standing, and I fired at her through the grass, but missed. I have, on two or three occasions, tried to shoot an animal through grass, but invariably without success. Either the stems of the grass deflect the bullet, or they obscure the aim. It was apparently against the dogs that the peacock was warning the sambur. Peafowl and the barking deer are the watchdogs of the jungle.

The only additions which I made in China to my collection of Asiatic trophies are a good Siberian roe-deer and the two Ovis Ammon heads shown in the illustrations, which were shot in the hills fringing the Mongolian Plateau. I shot the Ovis Ammon by fair walking and stalking at the age of sixty-three, after two unsuccessful expeditions, and was not a little proud of the achievement.

8] MONGOLIAN OVIS AMMON AND CHINESE HUNTERS.

I was so busy in China that I had very little time for recreation of any kind, but I was able to gratify to the full my propensity for wandering, and made most extensive tours in connection with my work. During the five and a half years that I was in China I visited most of the important salt-works on the coast from Korea to Tongking, and also made two expeditions to West China, visiting the provinces of Yunnan, Szechuan, and Kansu. In the autumn also, when the weather was favourable, I usually spent three weeks or a month under canvas, to have some vigorous exercise and keep myself in health. The breezy uplands on the border of Mongolia inhabited by these sheep offered a pleasant hunting-ground. The country is sparsely populated, is within easy access of Peking, and the people are accustomed to tents. In other parts of China the intense curiosity of the people makes tent life rather trying.

On my way to Yunnan in January 1915, in the course of a brief shooting expedition on the northern frontier of Annam, which was kindly arranged for me by the acting Governor-General of Indo-China, I shot, in company with M. Jardin, one of the Secretaries to the Government, a gaur or bison by moonlight, but unfortunately the beast turned out to be a cow. The jungle was too dense for stalking, and the only chance of sport was to wait in a clearing, which the animals frequently visited in the evening. I had shot a small bull two days before; and the bison did not, in consequence, come out from the forest into the clearing in which we were waiting

until the moon was up. We then heard them moving and went after them. The first animals we came to galloped off, and then stood at a short distance. We followed and found ourselves confronted by three bison, which faced us in the moonlight, snorting, at a distance of about 30 yards. We fired simultaneously at the largest of the three, and knocked it over like a ninepin with shots in the chest and shoulder; but the sex was unfortunately wrong. I have not heard of bison being shot by moonlight before, but this mode of hunting ought to be effective when, as not infrequently happens, a solitary bull is known to be in a particular place. The bison appear to be bolder in the moonlight, and a first shot at night with a follow on in the morning would be safe enough.

No account of my shooting and fishing experiences in India would be complete without some reference to Mary, a New Zealand or Waler mare, who was my faithful companion upon many an expedition. Mary was the most accomplished and intelligent horse I have ever seen. I bought her as a five-year-old in Calcutta in 1896, and, with intervals of leave and visits to England, I owned and rode her until the spring of 1913, when I finally left India. She was then showing signs of old age, and I secured for her a comfortable home. I bought her as a trapper, and she was first-rate both in saddle and harness, and had a wonderful constitution. I rode her several times upon inspection duty through the Punjab Salt Range and the Kohat Salt District in the North-West Frontier Province, and I rode her

MONGOLIAN OVIS AMMON AND CHINESE HUNTERS.

twice from Raipur in the Central Provinces to the border of the Madras Presidency, and on several other tours in the United and Central Provinces. She was amazingly sure-footed, and negotiated successfully year after year the perilous paths on the slopes above the Giri River in the hills near Simla, where mules used to meet with disaster. I have trotted her in her prime, twenty miles along the Grand Trunk road from Farrah to Agra in two and a half hours; and she was a fine swimmer, quite without fear in the water and obeying the bridle and voice in the same way as on land. I swam with Mary, both with and without a saddle, the fords of the Giri in high flood on two or three occasions; and if at any time I hesitated, owing to the force of the current, she would reach at the bridle and encourage me to launch away. As the fords were always immediately above rapids, the performance was a trial to the nerves; and, if the mare had lost her head, would have been very dangerous.

She was also very gentle and affectionate, and took great interest in what was going on around her. On one occasion, when I was playing a big mahser, her syce Mihndu was looking on, with the mare at the end of a long rope. As the fish, yielding to the pressure, loomed up from the deep water in the pool, the mare took two or three paces forward and stood alongside us with her ears cocked, to see what was going on.

When she was twenty years old I galloped down, on her back, a wounded nilgai bull after a long chase. When the bull stood and faced us I

jumped off and fired. It was the last cartridge I had, and I did not give much consideration to Mary, and fired close to her ear. The bull fell, but Mary objected to this treatment, looked at me reproachfully, and then ran away home, leaving me to find my way back in the dark.

She was very much attached to Mihndu, the syce, and myself, and I rarely had any difference of opinion with her ; and, except on one occasion, when her feet slipped on a sloping rock, and the slide ended in a scramble at the bottom, she never gave me a fall in all the years that I rode her.

CHAPTER II

SOME TIGER AND PANTHER STORIES

I SHOT my first tiger in the Kanker State in the Central Provinces in January 1900, under the wing of a gentleman who had shot many tigers and had had much experience of the sport. The lesson, which I had taken most to heart, was that a long shot taken in the direction of the beat might drive the tiger back into the beat and lead to a casualty among the beaters. There were three tigers in the beat, a tigress and two three-quarter grown cubs. My machan had been tied in front so as to give me the first chance of a shot, and my mentor sat in a machan behind me, so as to shoot any animal which might escape me. My machan was badly tied, especially for a man shooting, as I do, from the left shoulder. The string bed, which formed it, was tied with one end facing the beat, and along the left of the machan there were tree trunks. On this side, therefore, I could fire only straight in front of me, but I was too inexperienced to recognise fully the unsatisfactory nature of the position, and settled myself in the machan without making any objection. As the beat proceeded the tigress appeared and stood on my left front, looking up apparently at one of the Stops. She gave me

as good a shot as I have ever had in a beat, as she was broadside on and quite motionless; but the distance was over 100 yards, and, being very anxious not to be the cause of any mishap, I decided to allow her to approach. Suddenly, with a "Wouf," she started off at a gallop to the left, passed instantly out of my fire zone, and I was compelled to look on helplessly as she passed the machan. She was fired at but missed by my mentor, and got clean away. One of the cubs followed, and I got in a shot at it, as it passed, but missed. The other cub gave me an easy shot, and I killed it. If I had shot the tigress we should probably have bagged all three, but I had correctly carried out instructions, and the instructions were absolutely sound. The line between success and failure, in big-game shooting, is a very narrow one.

I then shot a fine tiger in a beat in the Bustar State, killing him with a single shot as he walked fast through the bushes. I also killed a fine panther by moonlight, when sitting up over a kill, though the body was unfortunately not found until the skin was spoiled. On the whole, therefore, I did pretty well for a beginner in this expedition.

I had also a very exciting sit for a panther in the course of this expedition, which I have always considered one of the most interesting and instructive of my experiences, although the result was a failure. The panther had killed a bullock, which was tied on a road running along the edge of a rather thin forest with open ground for a considerable distance on the other side of the

road. Gulali, the shikari, who was a very good man at his work, thought that the panther had retired across the open ground, and would approach the kill from that direction. Instead, therefore, of tying a machan for me in the forest, he made a platform on the top of a large bush, which was in the open ground about 30 yards from the kill. I got into the machan about 4.30 p.m. in bright sunlight, as it was the month of March, and had not sat there for more than half an hour when I saw the panther moving in the forest on my right front, about 150 yards away. He climbed on to a large rock, which was in the forest, and lay down facing the kill, to watch the road. In my position I was completely exposed from the waist upwards, and a *solah topee* does not harmonise with any greenery. In the position in which the panther was, also, I must have been well within his line of vision, as I was not more than eight feet or so from the ground. I sat, however, perfectly rigid, and the panther failed to discover my presence. After watching for half an hour or more he turned on the rock and began to watch the road in the other direction. A shorter inspection of the road on this side was sufficient to reassure him, and he began to approach the kill. He took all the cover which was available as he approached, but the sun shone brilliantly on his skin, and he was clearly visible. When he reached the kill his back was towards me, and I thought he was mine; but, as I raised the rifle, the animal lifted his head and half looked round, and, apparently, his eye caught the glint of the rifle-barrels in the

sun as he sharply cantered off. He gave me a good shot as he cantered away, but I hoped that he might return, and did not fire. He then took up his position behind a bush in the forest about 80 yards from the machan, and began once more to reconnoitre. It appeared to me, on reflection, that he must discover me this time; and, as I could partly see his outline behind the bush, I took the chance and fired, but missed him. It was bad luck. I ought to have waited for a few seconds longer; but, if he had not raised his head at the wrong moment, I should certainly have shot him. The incident showed me that, if it is difficult for you to see an animal which is standing motionless, it is also very difficult for an animal to see you under the same conditions, and I profited much by the experience.

I then took part in a tiger-shoot with elephants in the Terai on the border of the Bahraich district of Oudh, in April 1900, and my companions were Mr. Harrison, the Collector of the district, and Mr. A. Wood, the Manager of the Kapurthala Estates in Oudh. I had the elephant Chainchal on this occasion, and did pretty well. It was, I think, established that I put the first bullet into a tigress, which was subsequently killed by Harrison; but I made no claim for the skin, as the tigress was unquestionably knocked over and killed by him.

We then had a beat for a tiger which was fired at by both Harrison and myself, and badly wounded, and was eventually finished off by Wood. Both Harrison and myself were using black powder ·500 Express rifles, but fortunately

he had only wax in his bullets, and I had copper-tubes in mine. We both claimed the shot; and, as the result of a friendly discussion, it appeared probable that the successful shot was Harrison's. I therefore resigned the tiger with the best grace possible, and we were all round the carcase during the skinning operation, when Harrison's servant, who was groping in the inside of the tiger, held up something, saying, "What is this?" Examination showed that it was the copper tube of my bullet, making it clear that mine had been the successful shot, and the ownership of the tiger was accordingly transferred.

This tiger broke out of the beat and might have gone clear away before he was fired at; but the Maila nullah which we were beating, with its cool, shady trees and dense cane brake and a stream of water in the centre, was a favourite place for tigers in the hot weather, and the animal, sooner than face the burning heat of the sun at midday, returned to the nullah further on, and met with his death in consequence.

It is sometimes very difficult to decide who has fired the first successful shot, but, if the contending sportsmen are required to describe accurately the position of the tiger when they fired, a carefully conducted post-mortem examination, after removal of the skin, will generally disclose the truth. The excitement of a tiger-shoot is not, however, conducive to the frame of mind which is required for a judicial investigation, and heated arguments and disputes often result.

I shot a fine panther in the same beat as the tiger, and Harrison also shot a female panther.

Two or three days afterwards Wood shot a good tigress. The bag, therefore, was very evenly distributed on this occasion.

My next tiger-hunt was in January 1901, in the Patna State, which was, at the time, in the Central Provinces, but has now been transferred to Bengal. I had a female elephant to ride and a good native shikari with me, but no European companion, and the country we were hunting contained buffaloes as well as tigers. The first tiger we heard of was said to have eaten a certain number of bullocks and buffaloes and two men, and the Uriya villagers, who had suffered from his depredations, were naturally very anxious to have him killed. The first bullock we tied out was completely devoured, and the tiger was not in the beat. He killed again the following night, however, and dragged the carcase of the bullock from the road on which it was tied to a place within a few yards of the edge of the jungle in the direction of the village, and there lay up with it. A machan was tied for me, and the beat was lined up in the rice-fields, within a few yards—as appeared from a subsequent examination—of the tiger's resting-place. The first yell given by the beaters evidently startled the tiger, and before the beat had well started I saw him emerging from the jungle on my right at a fast trot. The Stop either did not see him or was seized with panic, as he made no attempt to check him. I turned quickly on the machan and fired, and the tiger broke into a gallop and disappeared. Examination showed that the shot had passed under the tiger and struck the ground well beyond

the place where he had broken into a gallop. It missed him, therefore, by a few inches only. The direction was good, and the elevation only was wrong.

This was a serious disappointment, but in the night the tiger, who was evidently a very ravenous brute, returned to the kill and dragged the remains to another hiding-place in the same jungle. The shikari wanted me to sit up for him, but I decided to have another beat. On this occasion the tiger emerged at a fast walk and gave me an easy shot, but on my wrong side. I hit him with the first barrel low down in the stomach. He gave a tremendous "Wouf," and went off at a gallop. I swung round on the machan and, as he was galloping off, made a good shot with the second barrel, and put a bullet into the centre of his back. When the beaters came up I descended and we began to look for blood. I knew that I had hit him with the first barrel, and the Stop on my left said that he had answered to the second shot also. There was no blood, however, and a small piece of fat about the size of my little finger-nail was the only trace of the tiger which could be found near the machan. The ground was most unfavourable, with clumps of bamboos at intervals and scrub jungle, as high as a man's waist, in between. There were, however, some trees. I sent for the riding elephant, and we advanced together, the elephant being a few paces in front, and I following on foot and keeping, as far as possible, a tree between me and the elephant, as I was doubtful of her staunchness. Before we had gone far the mahout

declared that he heard the tiger growling, but I urged him to proceed, and we advanced a few paces farther. Then there was a roar, and the elephant swung round and bolted. I have never seen an elephant travel as she did on that occasion, and the mahout said afterwards that she had actually twisted his neck by the rapidity with which she swung round. It was, however, a case of " eyes front," and I stood waiting for the attack. Fortunately for me, the tiger did not charge, but retreated, attempting to escape.

The demonstration caused a general stampede, but after some time my attendants were reassured and returned. Mihtab Khan had, as he explained, laid hold of the shikari as he was retreating, but the shikari said that he had recently married a wife, and was therefore obliged to take care of himself.

A protracted reconnaissance made from trees disclosed the fact that the tiger had gone, and in the bamboo clump, in which he was lying, there was a great pool of blood. The wounds had not bled until he lay down on the ground. This encouraged us all, and we started in pursuit, tracking the tiger by the blood which was now flowing. We followed him for a considerable distance into the open country, and there in a clump of bushes at the foot of a tree he lay up again. The Uriyas, as Indians often do, passed from panic to over-confidence, and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping them behind me. I had placed Mihtab Khan on the elephant, which followed along behind us, to give confidence to the mahout ; and from the elephant Mihtab

Khan and the mahout saw the tiger's ear move, as he lay in the clump of bushes. The shikari and I had passed within a few yards of him. We drew back and held a council of war. I had the black powder ·500 Express, with which I had shot the other four tigers, and the shikari had a Lee-Metford. My idea was to give the Lee-Metford to Mihtab Khan and allow him to fire from the back of the elephant, and to shoot the tiger, as he rose, with the ·500; but the mahout urged me to mount the elephant and shoot, and, as she was then standing very quietly, I decided to try this. The elephant, as I afterwards heard, would not stand a shot-gun; but, when drawn back from the proximity of the tiger, she allowed me to mount without difficulty and then, under pressure from the mahout, she advanced and stood within 30 yards of the bushes. After some time I made out the outline of the tiger crouching in the bushes, and the elephant allowed me to take a steady aim. As soon as I fired, however, she swung round with amazing quickness; and, seeing that I must be thrown off, as I was merely sitting on the pad and my hands were engaged with the rifle, I jumped and landed on my feet, but fell back, cracking the stock of my rifle. I sprang to my feet with very creditable rapidity, but fortunately for me the tiger was done for. He staggered to his feet but did not leave the bushes, and a shot by the shikari finally laid him low. My shot from the elephant merely passed through the forearm and did him no appreciable injury, but the shot in the back, as he galloped off, had inflicted a mortal wound. The shot in

the lower part of the belly also caused serious internal injury.

He was a young tiger, with a very good coat. The shikari thought he was too young to have commenced man-eating, but there did not appear to be any other tiger in the neighbourhood, and he was a very voracious animal. The view that only old or crippled tigers become man-eaters is only partly correct. Cubs, which have been brought up on human flesh, and which have repeatedly seen their mother attacking and killing human beings, must frequently take to the business when they begin hunting on their own account, especially if game is scarce in the place in which they reside, as was the case in the Patna State. Altogether, this tiger provided three successive days' entertainment. The rifle, though damaged, was not completely unserviceable, and I was able to go on shooting.

For some days after this excitement the elephant was decidedly mischievous. On the day following the death of the tiger she tried to catch hold of a native with her trunk as he ran past her; and on another occasion, after the mahout's wife had given her some bananas, she seized the woman round the waist with her trunk and lifted her up, but did not actually injure her. I was in the tent when this occurred, but, hearing a row, I came out and found the mahout abusing the elephant as only an Indian can.

She was, I think, the fastest and most comfortable elephant I have ever ridden, but she had a temper and was said to have killed several people.

The mahout managed her well, but he told me that she had been the favourite riding elephant of the Raja of Bustar, and that, on one occasion, when the Raja had gone down to the river to bathe and had dismounted from the elephant, she suddenly seized a man and tore him in two. The Raja, as was said, fell off his chair with fright, and after this, not unnaturally, parted with the elephant. The mahout said that she had killed five or six people at different times after this, but that he had succeeded in reducing her to submission. On one occasion, as he said, he had tied her up for the night and lain down to sleep at a safe distance, but had omitted to remove out of her reach the lance, which is used to subdue a refractory elephant. In the night he felt something in his hair, and, after brushing at it ineffectually, awoke to find that the elephant had got hold of the lance, broken it in two, and was trying to twist one of the broken pieces into his hair so that she might be able to pull him over to her. I am not prepared to vouch for the truth of this story; but, if it was a lie, it was exceedingly well told, and I saw no reason at the time to doubt the man. He became quite excited at the reminiscence. He was certainly a good mahout, and behaved well on the day when the tiger was shot.

On any occasion on which I was left alone on the back of the elephant, after hearing these stories, I was always glad to see the mahout return; but my personal relations with the elephant were very satisfactory.

We then started to hunt a man-eating family,

which were said to have eaten over twenty people between August and the time of my visit in January. There were a tigress and two well-grown cubs, and a tiger was said to join the party occasionally. These tigers had created a scare, and we had to tie out our own buffaloes. It was rather creepy work, but the shikari did this bravely enough. The last kill had occurred about eight days before we arrived on the scene, and the villagers had been too frightened to visit the place. I went there with the old man, who had been with the victim when he was killed, and saw the two bundles of wood which they were tying up at the time. Death appeared to have been instantaneous, as his companion said that the man, when seized, did not utter a cry. The drag was clearly visible in the grass, and, after following it for a few yards, we found the man's loin-cloth, and, farther on, the place where he had been eaten. We hunted for some days and tied out baits, but saw nothing of the tigers, which had for some reason or other left the neighbourhood.

We then turned our attention to buffaloes. My battery was not very suitable, but we had an encounter with one bull, and, with better trackers, I should certainly have had a shot. We were following a fresh track, and the trackers blundered right on to the bull as he was lying asleep on the ground. The men were confident that the bull, which was well known to them, would stand and face us; and this may have been the reason why they were not sufficiently careful. The buffalo was, however, thoroughly scared,

owing possibly to the presence of the shikari and myself, and we could not come up to him again or get any other chance of a shot.

My return journey from this expedition was the most uncomfortable that I have ever made. I had parted with the elephant and travelled in a bullock-cart. I had only an inexperienced cook, a table attendant, and Mihtab Khan. The table attendant went off his head, owing to fear of tigers and the unaccustomed surroundings, and became irresponsible and very dirty in his habits. I was disposed to leave him in a hospital in one of the native States, but Mihtab Khan said he had promised his uncle to look after him, and persuaded me to take him with us. We brought him back, therefore, to Agra, and I understand that he there completely recovered his health. Many years have elapsed, but I still remember the journey with a shudder.

In April 1901, I had another tiger-hunt in the Terai, on the border of the Bahraich district, with Mr. Faunthorpe, I.C.S., who was then the Collector, and Mr. A. Wood. We got no tigers in Nepal, and the expedition was in danger of being a complete failure, when we received news of a tigress which had killed in one day three head of cattle in a village in the Bahraich district, near the border. We moved camp to this place, and found that the cover, in which the tigress was lying, consisted of a triangular patch of high reeds on the border of a small lagoon. The line of elephants was formed at the base of the triangle, and the beat was a pretty and exciting one. Wood was with the line; I had the next

position in front of the beat, and Faunthorpe was beyond me. The tigress was soon on the move, and we could hear her splashing in the reeds as she moved along the edge of the lagoon. When the line was half-way through the patch of reeds she charged the elephants with a roar and threw the line into confusion. With a little more courage she could have broken through and escaped, but her heart failed her and she retreated until she was pushed up into the very apex of the triangle. She might have escaped across the water, as this side of the beat was unprotected ; but she would not face the open. At last, when driven into the extreme corner of the reeds, she rushed out on the side where we were all standing. Wood had a shot at her but missed, and she came straight for my elephant. Seeing the elephant, she declined the encounter, and swung round, and as she swung round I fired. A second later Faunthorpe's shot rang out. Our shots were so nearly simultaneous that he did not hear my shot, but I heard his. Two more shots were fired by Wood and myself at the tigress, as she was struggling in the grass; but these were misses. My shot struck the tigress in the heart, and Faunthorpe's shot struck her in the back near the shoulder as she was end on to him. I was using an express and firing shell, and the others fired solid bullets; there was, therefore, no difficulty in identifying the different shots on this occasion. Our two shots were fired almost simultaneously, but Faunthorpe, seeing that my shot had killed the tigress, did not make any claim. I rode an elephant belonging

to the Maharajah of Balrampur on this occasion, and she stood staunchly when the shots were fired, though she was not highly tried.

In 1903–4 I had a run of ill-luck, taking part in three expeditions to the Terai, in the course of which no less than nine tigers and tigresses and two cubs were shot, and the only animal which fell to my lot was a large panther, which I shot over a kill.

On the first occasion, in April 1903, the party consisted of Mr. A. Wood, the late Major Lumsden, I.M.S., Mr. Channer, the Divisional Forest Officer, and myself, and we hunted a portion of the Terai at some distance from the ground which we hunted during my first two expeditions. Major Lumsden rode the elephant Chainchal, and I was riding an elephant which was lent me by the Maharajah of Balrampur. Shortly after our arrival on the ground a good tiger was marked down in a very small patch of thick jungle on the bank of a small deep nullah, or stream, which was overhung with trees. The tiger had killed a chital, and dragged the carcase into the cover, and it was therefore a sure find. Lumsden was with the beat ; Wood had the best place on the bank of the nullah at the end of the patch of cover ; and Channer and I were among the trees on the opposite side of the nullah. The guns were, therefore, roughly speaking, at the four corners of a square with the corner, at which Wood was posted, projecting. The patch of jungle was very thick, and Lumsden was not thought to have any chance. Chainchal's mahout, however (Karim by name), was a very plucky,

intelligent fellow, with very good vision, and while the elephants were trying to force their way into the patch of jungle, he saw the tiger standing in thick cover. Lumsden failed to see him until he moved. He then fired both barrels, but he had missed his chance, and the tiger rushed from the thicket and plunged into the water with a tremendous splash, swimming straight across to where I was posted among the trees on the other bank. An overhanging branch obscured my vision at the particular point at which the tiger was crossing; and, though I could see the water moving as he swam, I could not actually see his head. He was, however, making for the bank very near the place where my elephant was standing; and the shikari in the howdah behind me, who perhaps saw the animal, was adjuring me to shoot. Very unwisely, therefore, I fired. The tiger answered to the shot with a roar, and the bullet evidently struck the water very near him. My elephant then swung round so that I could not fire again, and, looking backwards, I could just see the tiger climb the bank behind me. Wood had a shot at him as he ascended the bank, but missed. The tiger then made off along the bank and ran right into Channer. Thinking he was trapped, he turned with a roar and plunged with another splash into the water, and swam back to the thicket in which he was lying at the outset. Owing to the overhanging trees, he was not visible after he sprang into the water until he reached cover. After some time he was beaten out again, and this time took the line he was expected to take, giving Wood a good

chance. A shot near the head stopped him, and a second bullet finished him off. My shot was thought to have been a hit, but examination showed that it was Wood's tiger. This is the only occasion I can remember in which every member of a party had a fair chance in turn at a tiger. The beat also was one of the prettiest and most exciting in which I have ever taken part.

After this the shikaris reported that there were no other tigers in the vicinity of the camp, and went to some place at a considerable distance to look for tracks. We were reconciling ourselves to some hot days of waiting, but very soon after the shikaris had gone some herdsmen came in and said that a tiger had killed one of their buffaloes. We went to the place and found a recently killed buffalo; but the only patch of forest which was near the place had been fired, and, although it had apparently been too damp to burn well, some fallen trees were actually on fire. We tried a beat, and the tiger was there right enough. In shooting with elephants, there is very little danger to the beaters, and, as everyone is anxious to put the first bullet into the tiger, there is often some rather wild shooting. As the line advanced both Wood and I had shots. I fired without success at a movement in the high grass; and then the tiger, which was fairly cornered, broke with a roar into the open, a little to my left front. It was a grand spectacle, as the tiger showed up magnificently on the short green grass. With Chainchal, I should probably have got that tiger; but my elephant was not a good one, and I tried

her rather severely. Leaning well out of the howdah, I waited until the tiger was close up so as to make sure of the shot; but, just as I was pulling the trigger, the elephant funked and swung round with a jerk, and the rifle went off in the air. By the time the elephant had been turned round the tiger had galloped some distance; shots fired at his tail by Wood and myself were unsuccessful, and he got clean away. It was very disappointing; but it was partly my fault, as I ought to have made allowance for the possibility of the elephant funking, and fired as soon as the tiger appeared.

The Terai, or moist alluvial land, lying between the branches of the mighty Gagra River, provides grazing in the hot weather for large herds of cattle and buffaloes. The grass is burnt in the spring, and at the end of April the land is covered with short green grass. Tigers still abound in this part of India, and toll is taken of the herds. These grazing buffaloes will, as one of the herdsmen informed me, respond to a particular call announcing the advent of a tiger, and will charge *en masse* and drive the animal away; but young buffaloes, when detached from the herd, are not infrequently attacked and killed.

A tigress with three small cubs was then marked down in a dry ravine near a village. The tigress was in poor condition, and evidently found a difficulty in feeding her numerous progeny; and apparently she had taken up her quarters in the ravine on the chance of killing one of the village cattle, as there was no game in the vicinity. Wood was with the line of elephants on this occasion; Lumsden was on the left bank, and

Channer and I were on the right bank of the ravine. The beat was up the ravine. Shortly after the beat started Wood, whose elephant was moving along the bed of the ravine, saw the tigress crouching on the sand, facing him at a short distance. He fired at her with a shot-gun loaded with ball, and the shot passed through one of her ears, which was evidently cocked forward. Subsequent examination showed that the bullet drilled a small round hole, the edges of which were not even reddened with blood. It was a close shave, but the animal was quite uninjured and blood was not drawn. The tigress then appeared near Lumsden, who fired, and, as he subsequently said, knocked her over into the ravine. Very shortly after this she appeared on my side of the ravine. She walked quietly and quickly round a bush, and did not appear to be wounded, and I fired, hitting her with my Express on the near side, but rather far back. She disappeared into the ravine and wandered about there for a little time. Then Channer, who was shooting with a small-bore, high-velocity rifle, saw her and fired, and shortly after she was seen to be dead. Two bullet-holes were visible in the skin, one a small one in the back near the neck, and the other a large one in the near side. Lumsden was quite confident that he had hit the tigress and knocked her over, and suggested that the large hole in the side was the hole of exit of his bullet. Both the other sportsmen thought that the tiger was Lumsden's, and Channer did not claim a hit. There was much blood in the ravine, but it was impossible

to say from which wound it proceeded, and I therefore contented myself with pointing out that the hole in the side was the hole of my bullet, and did not claim the tigress and was not present at the post-mortem. The natives who skinned and cut up the tigress were told to produce the bullets, and mine was duly produced, and was admitted by Major Lumsden to be not his. His bullet, which was also an expanding one, was not found. On the following morning, when we were looking at the skin, Lumsden himself noticed a small round hole in the skin of the belly, but he was so convinced that he had shot the tigress that he did not give the matter much attention. I said nothing, but thought a good deal. It was clear to me that Lumsden had missed the tigress, and that I had put the first bullet into her, and that she had then been killed by Channer, whose bullet had entered the back and come out through the belly. I kept my conclusions, however, to myself, merely resolving that I would always be present at a post-mortem in the future. Poor Lumsden was a good sportsman, and was perfectly convinced that he had shot the tigress; but, as already said, a painstaking investigation is often necessary before it can be determined who has scored the first hit.

A forest officer of my acquaintance told me that on one occasion he had arranged a tiger-shoot for two military officers. One had, if I remember right, shot a tiger before, and the other had not. The tiger went first to the more experienced sportsman of the two, who fired at it. The tiger then went to the other man, who

fired at it and killed it. Overjoyed at his good fortune, he chaffed his friend about his bad shot, and the other accepted the chaff. The forest officer, from curiosity, went along the route by which the tiger had approached the second machan, and found blood all along the track. But, where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise; both the sportsmen were satisfied, and he left them in blissful ignorance of his discovery.

Major Lumsden shot two of the small cubs. The third must also have died, as they were much too young to hunt for themselves.

Our next hunt was an exciting one. A tiger was marked down in a thick bed of reeds in a swampy clearing in the middle of sal forest. We posted ourselves round the reeds, and the tiger broke out near the place where Channer was posted; but, as well as I remember, he did not, owing to some difficulty with his elephant, get a shot. As the tiger was disappearing into the forest Lumsden fired and put a bullet into him. There was very little blood, and it was uncertain how far the tiger had gone; but we formed a long line in the forest, with the elephants about 50 yards apart, and drove forward in the hope of rounding him up. I was on the extreme right of the line, and before we had gone far the mahout said that he heard the tiger growling. I heard him also and ought, perhaps, to have called a halt and sent for the others. I was afraid, however, that the tiger might escape, as he did not appear to be badly wounded, and was also, it must be admitted, very anxious to see a fine charge. The prospect of an encounter, therefore,

was not unwelcome. I accordingly encouraged the mahout to proceed; and, as soon as we advanced, the tiger burst from some bushes at the foot of a tree in which he was lying and charged.

I have heard it said that a tiger always charges at a fast run. This one charged at a gallop. He was in the middle of a spring, with his forelegs stretched out in front and the hind-legs stretched out straight behind him, when I fired. Directly I fired, the elephant swung round so that I could not fire the second barrel, and the tiger pushed home the charge and seized her by the middle of the thigh. In the struggle that ensued I received a severe bruise on the forearm, but was not otherwise injured, though I was in great danger of being crushed, as the howdah was in constant collision with a tree or trees. The howdah, which was very strongly built, was much damaged. I was quite unable to shoot, and got down into the howdah and trusted for safety to the elephant. Presently she flopped down, and I thought the tiger had pulled her over, but apparently she sat down so as to pinch the tiger's head and make him let go. The manœuvre succeeded, as she shook him off, and then got up and bolted. She did not, however, go far, and the mahout recovered control and stopped her. Mihtab Khan, who was behind me in the howdah, seized a bough in the struggle, and, being a powerful man, swung himself up into a tree. He had a Lee-Metford rifle in one hand, and it was a fine acrobatic performance; but he made no attempt to fire at the tiger.

I then sent for the others, and Wood and Lumsden joined me. The tiger had retreated to the bushes from which he had charged, and lay there growling. We all advanced upon him together, but my elephant was badly shaken and would not keep in line with the other two. Wood saw, or thought he saw, the tiger, and fired the first shot, but the tiger made no response and continued his low growling. Lumsden then pushed forward on Chainchal, and saw the tiger lying on the ground, and put a bullet into his brain. There were two bullet-holes in his side, and his hind-leg was broken to pieces below the hock. My bullet had struck him in the flank and run down his hind-leg, as it was stretched out behind him in the gallop. But for this he would probably have sprung on top of the elephant, and might have pulled one of us out of the howdah, as he was in no way crippled and made a most determined charge. The elephant was badly mauled, but recovered under treatment. If she had not turned round, I might have finished off the tiger without difficulty with the second barrel.

This was the best tiger-shoot in which I ever took part, though in the matter of the bag I personally came off badly. My elephant did not serve me well, but in the first beat I made a bad error of judgment. I think, however, that I put the first bullet into one of the three full-grown tigers which were killed, and contributed materially to the death of another. I may possibly have transposed the order of one or two of the hunts, but the different events and scenes are still fresh in my memory.

On the next expedition the party consisted of Mr. Wood, Major Lumsden, and myself. Wood shot a tigress and a young tiger in a beat in which we were seated in machans, but I think these were the only two shots which were fired at tigers in the course of the expedition, which was comparatively unsuccessful and uneventful.

I had, however, a very interesting experience with panthers. We were on our return from the expedition, and, having heard that there was a panther in the vicinity of our camp, decided to sit up. We accordingly tied out three goats in the evening in the sal forest, and sat over them in machans for some hours. It was a very hot evening, and the perspiration on my hands attracted a large number of bees, which made matters very uncomfortable. I had heard, however, the sharp warning bark of a kakar, and in the stillness of the forest I thought that I heard two animals moving in the undergrowth, so I sat on full of hope until it was nearly dark. The others had no encouragement, and went home early. When Mihtab Khan arrived with an elephant to fetch me, I said that I had heard two animals, and the mahout, stating as a fact what appeared to him to be probable in the way that Indians frequently do, said that they were pigs. I thought that he had seen pigs, and got on to the elephant, and a village yokel untied the goat and followed us with it along the path in the forest. Presently he gave a cry of alarm, and we stopped and inquired what was the matter. He said "Mujhe gher liya" (It surrounded me). The mahout asked what it was, and he said that

he did not know. The mahout said it was a pig, and the yokel was reassured, and we proceeded.

Before we had gone far Mihtab Khan, who was looking backwards along the path, said that a panther was following us. The mahout, who had had much experience of shikar, did not agree; but I thought that in the gathering gloom I could see something, and accordingly stopped the elephant and turned it round. We then tied the goat on the path a few paces from the head of the elephant and waited. We had not waited more than a few seconds when a panther charged down the path, straight for the elephant. It was dark, but I might have had a fair shot at him as he came, but thought that he would check for a moment on seizing the goat, and that I would then have a better chance. In his rush, however, he swept the goat off the path into the jungle on the right, and I was obliged to fire into the bushes. The shot made the panther drop the goat, which was still living, but had no other effect. As I fired I heard a rustle in the forest on the left of the path. There evidently, therefore, were two panthers. Being suspicious perhaps of a trap, they did not attack the goat while I was waiting in the machan; but, when they saw the goat being taken away, their hunger got the better of their caution. One of them tried first to intimidate the yokel, who was leading the goat, by jumping out on to the path in front of him; and then the attempt was made to carry off the goat from the close proximity of the elephant. Panthers are sometimes exceedingly daring, and when

they do take to man-eating are very troublesome and dangerous.

On the next occasion on which I visited the Terai the party consisted of Major Lumsden, Mrs. Lumsden, and myself; and Mrs. Lumsden, who was a very good shot, killed a tiger in fine style. The tiger had killed in a sandy nullah, and lain up with the kill in a small patch of thick cover under the high bank of the nullah. We were all posted in the forest facing the high bank in question, Lumsden on the right, Mrs. Lumsden, who was on Chainchal, in the centre, and I on the left. We took up our positions just in time, as the tiger, scenting trouble, tried to slink away before the beat commenced. He came towards Mrs. Lumsden, who hit him with her first shot with the Rigby-Mauser she was using, but missed him with the second, as he turned and dashed back into the beat. He soon appeared again on the same line, and Mrs. Lumsden fired, hitting him in the mouth. The bullet, however, merely broke one of the canine teeth, and was diverted. A shot in the head is often a very unsatisfactory one. The tiger then tried to slink out on the right, and Lumsden had two shots at him, hitting him with one and turning him back into the beat, but missing him with the other. He then broke out at a gallop between Major and Mrs. Lumsden; and the latter, with a well-placed shot, rolled him over. I was on lower ground, and, although I was not more than 100 yards distant from Mrs. Lumsden, I could not see what was going on.

The tiger had rather a small head, and was

certainly wanting in spirit, as he made no attempt to take the offensive; but he was the largest tiger that I have ever seen shot, measuring between pegs fixed in the ground, at the head and tail, 9 feet 8 inches.

A day or two after this we had a beat for two young tigers in the very place in which Wood had shot the two tigers on the previous expedition; and, as before, we were posted in machans. Mrs. Lumsden had shots at the tigers, as they broke, but failed to stop them. We then formed a long line, and hunted them through the sal forest for some hours. Lumsden had a shot at one of them, a young tigress, which then passed me at a gallop. The distance, when I fired, was considerable, but the tigress passed me apparently unwounded. One of the two shots, however, was evidently a hit, as the tigress was seen shortly afterwards lying up behind a tree. I had a staunch but very slow elephant, and Lumsden reached the place before me and put a bullet into the tiger. One or two more shots were then fired to finish her off. I made no claim, as the tigress may possibly have been wounded by Lumsden's first shot, and he certainly gave her the *coup de grâce;* but the idea among the men was that I had put a bullet into her.

After the death of the tigress we sat unsuccessfully over two kills which had occurred in the forest until a late hour, and then had a long elephant-ride back to camp, arriving there long after dark. It was hot weather, and, for a lady, it was a wonderful exhibition of endurance. We got no more tigers; but I shot the panther

already referred to in the course of this expedition.

I had also an interesting but most exasperating experience, when sitting up over a kill for a tiger. One of our buffaloes had been killed, and we had beaten the ground, but the beat was blank. It was decided, therefore, that I should sit up for the tiger on the chance of his returning to the kill. A machan was constructed, and a local shikari, who was with us, climbed into it. I ordered him out, but he pleaded very hard to be allowed to remain; and, as the kill was lying among bushes, I unfortunately thought that his hearing might be of use, and allowed him to sit with me. Before it was dark the tiger came, and the shikari, suddenly seeing him standing on some rising ground above the level of the machan, completely lost his nerve. He stammered out that the tiger had come, and threw his arms round me to turn me round to have a shot at it. The tiger of course saw the movement, or heard the noise, and was off. I have always regarded it as creditable to my forbearance that I did not lay a hand on the shikari.

On one of these two expeditions I saw a very interesting instance of the sagacity of the elephant. One of the pad elephants had trodden upon the point of a long acacia-thorn; and, as the thorn was stout and very sharp, it ran into the foot. The elephant had rubbed the skin of the foot quite thin in trying to get rid of the thorn, and the head of the thorn was so deeply crushed into the foot that it was impossible to get hold of it. The elephant was made to lie down, and, while

THE DEAD TIGRESS.

the mahout sat near her head and kept her quiet, Lumsden cut away the foot all round the thorn until it was possible to seize it with a pair of pincers and extract it. The elephant was groaning with pain, and a kick might have caused Lumsden most serious injury; but the beast had the intelligence to know that he was helping her, and remained perfectly quiet during the operation. I do not think any dog would willingly permit a stranger to cause real pain to it without vigorously objecting, even if the pain were caused in the dog's own interest.

In April 1905 I made my last expedition to the Terai. The party on this occasion consisted of Mr. W. B. M. Bird, Mr. A. Wood, and myself. Major Fullerton, who had succeeded Major Lumsden as Civil Surgeon of Bahraich, was also with us during part of the time. On this occasion I rode the elephant Chainchal, and had better fortune. Our shooting-camp was on the bank of the Rapti River; and we reached the camp on the 20th of April. In the afternoon of that day and on the 21st we hunted without any definite information and without success, but on the 22nd a tigress was marked down in some very thick cover. The first beat we had for her was unsuccessful, but she did not leave the place, and we beat the cover again on the following day from a different direction. I was on one side of the cover a little in advance of the line of elephants, and when the line had advanced for some distance the tigress came along the edge of the cover, quite near the elephant. She was not properly visible, and I was doubtful about

firing; but the mahout, Karim, pointed in the direction in which the bushes were moving and urged me to shoot. I decided, therefore, to chance a shot and fired. The shot, by good fortune, struck the tigress near the root of the tail, and she turned and rushed in the direction of the beaters outside the edge of the jungle. Chainchal stood staunchly, and with the second barrel I broke the tigress's left shoulder as she charged past me. She then lay up under a bush in the cover, and with some difficulty I made her out from the howdah and finished her off. This tigress had a very beautifully marked skin, which makes a very handsome trophy.

On the next day a good tiger was marked down, and, having shot the tigress, I was put in what was supposed to be the worst place, at the end of the beat, Wood having the position on the side of the beat, while Bird was covering him. But fortune favoured me, and, as the line of elephants advanced, I saw the tiger's head in the jungle about 80 yards away. He was standing broadside on to Wood, and at no great distance, but was hidden from him by the bushes. Momentarily I expected to hear his rifle, but he did not fire, and the tiger remained standing with his head slightly turned, listening to the advancing elephants. I accordingly fired from a standing position in the howdah, aiming between the eyes. I made a good shot, the bullet striking the tiger between the nose and the left eye. Subsequent examination showed that the bullet, which was a shell from a ·500 black powder Express, broke the palate, nearly severed the tongue, and tore

THE DEAD TIGER.

off two big molar teeth, one in the upper and one in the lower jaw. The tiger probably would have died, but for the time being he was in no way crippled. For some seconds, however, he was knocked out of time; and, as nothing was visible, I hoped that I had killed him. He then got up and dashed out of the jungle at a gallop, mad with pain and rage. I failed to stop him; but, after galloping aimlessly about for some seconds, he passed near Bird, who knocked him over and then finished him, with two well-directed shots. As already said, a shot in the head or face often gives very unsatisfactory results.

On the 26th of April Bird got his chance and shot a fine tiger, killing it with a single shot. He was using a double-barrelled ·360 bore high-velocity rifle, and the tiger, with a bullet through his heart, galloped, apparently uninjured, for at least one hundred yards. Thinking he had missed, Karim urged Chainchal to speed to cut him off, and, just as an encounter was imminent, the tiger collapsed in his gallop, and fell stone dead in a small ditch. He lay in this ditch all limp and crumpled up, like a well-shot rabbit, as may be seen from the illustration.

On the 28th Bird shot a bear, which was marked down by the shikaris in a clump of bushes; and on the 30th of April he shot a second tiger.

This tiger had apparently had a fight with another tiger, or with a bear, and had come off second best. He had lost one eye and was badly clawed about the body. When beaten out of the cover, in which he was lying, he broke at a gallop; but his blind eye prevented him from

seeing Bird, whose elephant was standing in a fairly open place. The tiger therefore passed close to him, and was killed by a single well-placed shot.

On the 1st of May Bird and I had a very interesting but unsuccessful sit for another tiger. The tiger had killed and eaten two or three of our buffaloes, but could not be located for the purposes of a beat. He was, evidently, a very cunning brute. One day the shikaris returned full of confidence, having marked him down in a very favourable locality, but he cleared out before we arrived and the beat was blank. We decided, therefore, to sit up over a live buffalo, which was tied upon the road upon which the other buffaloes had been killed. Our machan was well screened, having been tied in a thick leafy tree, but we could see only to our front, and could neither shoot nor see anything up the road behind us. The buffalo was tied about 20 paces from us down the road. There was no moon, but the night was clear, and the tiger came at about ten o'clock. I was dozing at the time, but Bird was watchful and heard him, and, at a touch from him, I took in the situation. The tiger stood for some time on the road to the rear of the machan, watching the buffalo, and then, as could be seen in the morning, lay down in the grass to our right, nearly parallel to the machan. Then he got up and walked round the buffalo, without showing himself; but apparently he was suspicious of a trap, and made no attack. The buffalo did not appear to be particularly alarmed, but kept head on to the tiger, and, as the tiger moved,

BIRD'S FIRST TIGER.

the buffalo's head followed it round. After an hour or so, the tiger departed, and we sat there until the dawn without any further excitement. We heard spotted deer calling in the distance, and the tiger was apparently in pursuit of them.

I have heard it said, more than once, that a tiger will not kill readily a buffalo with a white blaze on his forehead. The one tied out had a white blaze, and this may have been the reason why the tiger would not attack. There certainly was no other cause apparent. I do not think the tiger could possibly have detected our presence, as we both sat very still and quiet, and the machan was well hidden.

Some days of waiting and unsuccessful hunting followed, but on the 6th of May a tigress was marked down in the same cover in which I had shot the tiger on the 24th. Fullerton was given the best place, and had a good shot at the tigress, but unfortunately missed. I had two shots at her as she galloped away, but she broke out of the cover to my right and at some distance from me, and I failed to stop her.

This ended the hunt, and on the 7th of May we struck our tents and started for Nipal Ganj on our return journey to Bahraich.

The illustrations of the dead tigers and of other scenes during the expedition are reproduced from photographs taken by Mr. Bird. It was his first tiger-shoot, and he had good fortune and shot very straight.

CHAPTER III

THE PATLI DUN

The Ramganga, in the Patli Dun, is a beautiful little river running through a reserved sal forest, which is teeming with animal life; and when I was Commissioner of Northern India Salt Revenue I made two expeditions to the river from Bijnor in the United Provinces.

On the first occasion I combined shooting with fishing, and two incidents which occurred in the course of the expedition made it a very memorable one. The Divisional Forest Officer gave me a permit to shoot for fourteen days, and an elephant, which was said to be staunch, was lent to me. I accordingly secured the services of a local shikari, and purchased three or four young buffaloes on the chance of getting a shot at a tiger. The buffaloes were tied out, and before many days had passed one of them was killed upon a forest line. The place was not favourable, and the buffalo had been securely tied to a tree-stump to prevent the tiger from dragging the carcase into some long grass, which was immediately adjacent, and where there were no trees. At the site of the kill there were some trees, and a machan was tied for me in a leafy tree almost immediately over the kill. There was no moon

in the coming night, and the day was dark and drizzling. The shikari, therefore, agreed that it would be quite useless for me to sit up after nightfall; and it was arranged that he should come with the elephant to fetch me as soon as it was dark. When the machan was tied I had approved its position, but on climbing into it I found that it was unsuitably located. In the first place, it was not more than 12 feet, at the outside, from the ground, and this was not high enough to be comfortable on a dark night; and, in the second, it was tied at right angles to the carcase of the buffalo, and so close above it that I could only see to shoot at an animal near, or on, the carcase, by sitting on the very extreme outer edge of the machan. The afternoon was, however, well advanced, and I decided to make the best of the situation and settled myself for a vigil.

The calling of the chital, with which the Dun abounded, kept my mind occupied; and, although the drizzling rain was uncomfortable, the time passed not unpleasantly until darkness settled on the land. I then began to be impatient and annoyed with the men for not coming to relieve me. It was too dark to see anything, and I was sitting with my rifle across my knees, quite without hope, when what appeared to be the call of a sambur rang out in the stillness, and I felt that the tiger had arrived. I have heard a Forest Officer, with much experience as a shikari, say that a tiger can, and does, imitate the call of a stag when approaching a kill; but my impression at the time was that the call was the startled call of a stag. That the

tiger was there I felt sure, and my conviction was presently proved to be correct by two tremendous sniffs, the tiger having apparently detected the smell of the elephant. I was so situated, and was so near the ground, that it was decidedly exciting, and if I had been able to see, it would have been too exciting to be agreeable. My impression was that the tiger was under me, but an examination of the footprints in the morning showed that he was standing at right angles to the carcase of the buffalo, parallel to the machan with his paws nearly touching the carcase. As I was sitting on the extreme edge of the machan, he could not have been more than 14 feet from me; in fact, with a fishing-rod, I could have touched him. Presently he moved over the carcase, and, as he moved, the colour showed for an instant against the blackness of the night. He then settled himself immediately under me, and in the stillness I heard his teeth click in the hide of the buffalo, which he tried to drag. I turned the rifle down right under me and fired, but unfortunately did not turn it quite far enough, and an examination made in the morning showed that the bullet had missed his head by a few inches. The marks of the teeth in the hide and the mark of the bullet in the ground were quite clear. There was silence for a second, and then I heard him gallop off.

It was very disappointing, as the tiger would probably have killed again, and I should have had a better chance with a three or four days' moon; but, as the saying is, "It is better to have loved and lost, than never have loved at all," and the

incident was very exciting at the time, and provided me with much food for subsequent reflection.

I fished the river with good success. The late Sir Edward Buck, who gave me information about the Ram Ganga, said that mahser might be caught in it up to 18 pounds in weight; but, fishing with natural bait, I caught much larger fish in the river than this.

A few days after the adventure with the tiger I had another very interesting experience. The Maharajah of Balrampur, a wealthy landowner in the United Provinces, keeps a large number of elephants, and the elephants and their drivers are trained to run down and capture wild elephants in the jungle. When the elephant which is being hunted is a male, a battle is necessary before capture can be effected; and the wild elephant is attacked and beaten into submission by the trained male elephants in the hunt, or Kheddah, as it is called by the Indians. The forests in the Dehra Dun between the rivers of the Ganges and the Jumna, where elephants are numerous, is a favourite hunting-ground; and invitations to hunt-parties given by the Maharajah are naturally much sought after.

It had long been my desire to witness one of these hunts, and, by a piece of rare good fortune, Nanneh Khan, the Captain of the Kheddah, on his return journey to Balrampur from the Dehra Dun jungles, brought his elephants to the place at which I was fishing on the Ram Ganga, to hunt a solitary bull elephant which had been marked down by his shikaris. A large male

elephant is an important prize. Broadly speaking, the value of an elephant in India increases in proportion to his size; and a male elephant, when captured young, does not attain his full natural development in captivity. I had heard the elephant breaking trees in the forest a day or two before the arrival of the Kheddah, but had not given the matter any attention. The shooting of elephants in India, unless they are rogues, is not permitted.

A more favourable place for an exhibition hunt could not possibly have been found. The forest rest-house, at which I was staying, was situated in a large clearing between the river on the north and the sal forest on the south. Parallel to the clearing, and at no great distance from it, a line of low hills ran through the forest, and the elephant was in the strip of sal forest between the clearing and the hills. Mr. Millward, the Divisional Forest Officer, who was on tour in the neighbourhood, came to the rest-house on the day that the Kheddah arrived, and very kindly gave me a mount on his riding-elephant Nellie, to enable me to see the hunt. Both Millward and I naturally wished to accompany the trained females, which were to run the wild elephant down; but Nanneh Khan at first made some demur to this. Eventually, however, he yielded to Millward's insistence, and in the morning we moved off with the hunters to the western end of the clearing to take part in the drive. The fighting-elephants were massed, under the command of Nanneh Khan, at the eastern end of the clearing. From the clearing

we turned a semicircle and proceeded to beat down the strip of forest between the clearing and the hills. The wild elephant was soon started; a shot was fired to head him in the right direction, and the next moment we were all in a mad pursuit.

The other elephants were stripped for the fray, their only gear being ropes and a tiny seat at the stern, where the driver's assistant sat with a mace studded with nails to belabour the elephant on the rump and urge it onwards. We were handicapped to some extent by our equipment, as the usual pad, or mattress, on which the riders sit, had been tied upon Nellie, and she was not specially dressed for the occasion. She was, however, a splendid elephant, and, although we were not in the first flight, we were well up in the second. While we were in full career a creeper caught me round the throat, and nearly pulled me off the elephant; but I managed to shout, and Nellie answered beautifully to an order from the mahout to halt, and the situation was saved.

After a space of half a mile or more, we came in sight of the wild elephant. Three or four of the tame elephants were around him, and the mahouts were attempting to fasten their nooses on to his neck or limbs. The first mahout who fastens a noose on a wild elephant receives a reward of twenty rupees, and there is naturally, therefore, keen competition. For some time the wild elephant made no objection to the presence of the tame females, and I thought that an easy and uneventful capture was about to be made; but eventually he turned crusty and

stood at bay. A pause followed, and then Nanneh Khan appeared on the scene with the fighting elephants. There were five or six of them, and shoulder to shoulder they bore down upon the wild elephant. The wild elephant had only one tusk, but this was sharp, while the points of the tusks of the tame elephants had been sawn off. The tusks do not, however, appear to play much part in an elephant fight, and the blow or shove is given with the centre of the forehead. The wild elephant was quite undaunted by the phalanx with which he was confronted, and charged gallantly into the midst of his opponents; and I distinctly saw the head of one of the tame elephants jerked backwards with the blow he received. A grand mêlée ensued, the tame elephants pummelling the wild one, while the drivers of the females most courageously dismounted and attempted to fasten their nooses on the hind-legs of the wild elephant. A charge by the wild elephant knocked one of the tame elephants clean over, but the two men on his back escaped serious injury. We were in close proximity to the combat, and the drivers of the Kheddah elephants continually shouted to Nellie's mahout to take her away to a safe distance, but, under Millward's orders, he kept close to the battle. More than once there was no elephant between us and the wild one, but Nellie's sex protected us, and the wild elephant was too gallant to attack.

A battle of elephants is not, to outward appearance at any rate, a specially ferocious combat. Tremendous blows are given and taken, but

the bulk of the animals is so great that their movements are necessarily characterised by a certain amount of deliberation, and the fierce, rapid impact which you see for example in a ram fight, is accordingly wanting. Elephants also fight in silence, and, in the absence of any roaring or screaming, it is not easy to realise that a life-and-death struggle is proceeding.

Pressed on every side by his enemies, the wild elephant appeared to be tiring, and I think that he would have been overborne had he not, either by accident or design, fought his way to a deep pool of water in the forest, into which he plunged. As he emerged dripping from his bath, with one of the other elephants pummelling him from behind, Bobs Bahadur—so called because he had been captured in a Kheddah at which Lord Roberts had been present—was brought up to charge him in front ; and the two elephants stood for some seconds facing each other, offering a splendid opportunity for a photograph if we had had a camera. The wild elephant calmly awaited the onset; but, from Bobs' attitude, it was clear that the prowess displayed by his antagonist had overawed him, and he would not close. In fact, shortly afterwards Bobs declined to face a charge delivered by the wild elephant, and fled ignominiously, with the wild one in hot pursuit.

The bath settled the issue. The wild elephant was inspirited and invigorated, and the attacks became more and more feeble, and the drivers less and less willing to trust themselves on the ground. As the wild one stood in the midst of

his assailants, a gun was fired by one of the hunters, who was on the outskirts of the battle, presumably with the idea of overawing him; but, disregarding the other elephants, he rolled up his trunk and made a splendid charge at the smoke. The gunner made himself scarce, and the elephant was by this time clearly master of the situation. At Nanneh Khan's request, Millward jumped off Nellie and had three shots at the wild elephant, with the object of crippling him. The first shot was fired at the leg, and the second at the head; but both of these were without effect, and a third shot was fired which, as the elephant turned, struck him on the stern. It was a solid bullet, however, and could not have done any serious injury. Fortunately perhaps, as the beast had put up a gallant fight, Millward had no more bullets, so the elephant lived to fight another day. I even heard it rumoured that he returned some months afterwards and proceeded to court Nellie when she was feeding in the jungle.

The fighting-elephants were, as Nanneh Khan said, worn out with fighting, and McDonnell Bahadur, one of the best of them, was injured, and was not out on the day of the battle.

A visit to the camp of the Kheddah to inspect the captives was very interesting. There were two captured tuskers which required rigorous treatment, but it was amazing to see how quickly the captured females accepted the position. I saw a full-grown female walking peaceably to water, with only one tame elephant in charge and one rope attached to her neck; and it was said that

she had been captured only a few weeks before. The males, when taken to water, were roped to an elephant in front and to another behind, and were evidently kept on short commons, as they were thin and worn-looking. The natural docility of the elephant soon reconciles the animal to captivity.

My second fishing expedition to the Patli Dun was a failure. The weather was cold and unseasonable, and the water was out of order, owing to a succession of storms in the hills, and I caught only a few small fish. I had no shooting either on that occasion, except at alligators. The lower reaches of the river were full of large fish-eating alligators (*garial*) which must take a heavy toll of the fish, but I did not see any flesh-eating alligators (*maggar*) in the Ram Ganga.

CHAPTER IV

MAHSER FISHING

MAHSER fishing is, in my opinion, in some respects superior to salmon fishing. In water which has been much fished big mahser can only be caught by spinning or trolling; and spinning, although it requires a good deal of skill, is, I admit, inferior to fly-fishing. If trolling is necessary, the sport and the methods are much the same, whether you are trying to catch mahser or salmon. Mahser fishing has, however, some special features of its own, which, to me at any rate, have always made it very attractive.

A mahser hooked in a hole with no other deep water in the vicinity, will not, as a rule, leave the place, and consequently sulks and shows poor sport; but the maddened rush for his lair of a mighty fish, which is struck when on the feed up-stream is something to be experienced. The line fairly shrieks through the rings, and the slightest check is fatal. I have had 200 yards of line taken out in one terrific rush by a 35-lb. mahser on the Bias River. The rush finished him, and he did not move again, and was hauled in at the end tamely enough. A mahser certainly does not struggle against destiny as gamely as a salmon, but after all it is the first two minutes

which really count ; and after that I am always eager to finish with a fish and get on to the next.

A mahser nearly always rushes down-stream when he is hooked, and, if there is an island or big rock in the river, he will take the deeper channel. If a fish is on one side of an island or rock, and you are on the other, he will break you ; and, as the fish rushes down-stream, you must contrive to follow him and keep on the right side of any obstacle. This often necessitates fording the river in strong water, where there is a very appreciable risk of being drowned. Some of the Indian fishing-ghillies, I have had have been first-rate in the water, as they were good swimmers and with their bare feet they got a good foothold on the sand or rocks on the bottom. Often I have been borne struggling down-stream, clinging desperately to my ghillie with one hand, and holding on to a big fish with the other. My friend, the late Colonel Downman of the Gordon Highlanders, who was a fine fisherman, told me that he once went down a rapid on the Giri with a 34-pounder, but this is a feat which I have never been called upon to attempt.

On one occasion I was fording the Giri River in high flood with Mihndu, the syce, Mihtab Khan, who was lame, having crossed the river on the mare's back at another place. A local native had shown us the fords, and with arms linked we were working our way across. Suddenly the local native, fearing apparently that I might be drowned, lost his nerve, threw off my arm with a cry, and went to one side. I exhorted Mihndu to be firm, and he clung desperately to

my arm, and slowly but steadily we won our way across. "Mihndu," I said, "if we had slipped, we should have been drowned." "Aur kya?" (What else?) said old Mihndu rather sulkily.

Another point in favour of mahser fishing is that you frequently fish in beautifully clear water, and see, therefore, more of the game. It is a pretty sight to see your bait twirling away far down-stream, and to see a big fish dash out from the side of some rock and take it.

Mahser fishing is also more of an adventure. Much of the best of it is obtained in rapid streams flowing through wild country, in which animal life is abundant, or through the low hills, fringing the outer Himalayas, where the scenery is very beautiful and the camping very enjoyable. Some of my fishing expeditions have been to me the perfection of a holiday.

Justice compels me to add that the sport is precarious, and that a fishing expedition often ends in failure. When a river is in flood and the water is very discoloured, fishing is a hopeless business, and you have to sit on the bank, like Horace's rustic, and wait "dum defluit amnis"; and this is naturally very annoying. The fish, too, are very capricious, and sometimes will not take for days together, though all the conditions appear to be perfect, so that you begin to wonder if there are any fish in the river. The fish are certainly migratory to some extent, and move up and down the rivers in accordance with the season; and you may easily be too early or too late for this migration at any particular point. As Aziza, the Sopur fisherman, said to me once:

"The mahser are like the Sahib log [the English]. They come and visit Kashmir for three months, and then go away."

Some disappointments in my youth turned my attention from fishing to polo and pig-sticking, but when these were "shuv' be'ind me long ago and far away" the piscatorial instinct revived.

As a hunter, I always regarded myself as a tyro. As a mahser fisherman I had considerable success; and some notes as to my methods may therefore not be unacceptable to some of my readers.

In large, clear, fast, and even-flowing rivers, like the Bias in the Punjab, a spoon is a very good bait. It is visible to a great distance, and the fish take it with a rush without having the time to reconnoitre. The old-fashioned oval spoon is, in my opinion, superior to the hog-backed spoons, which are now so much in vogue; as, when you get an offer, a fish is much more likely to be hooked. But in a river with rapids and pools, the recesses of which have to be carefully searched out, my experience has been that, for big fish, there is nothing like natural bait and a Hardy's crocodile-spinner. These spinners, however, I usually had more strongly mounted than they are when offered for sale. I attached the long flight along the belly of the bait with the middle triangle at the anal fin, and the other triangle just short of the tail; and the short flight I attached along the back, with the triangle at the dorsal fin. It is important to get a fish that really fits the spinner, and I always sewed in the hooks and flights so that

there was no projection. I paid much attention to these points. The proper adjustment of a bait takes time, but the time is well spent.

In spinning for salmon the slow-dragging spin is said to be more attractive, but in mahser fishing my experience is that a bait can hardly spin too fast, and the crocodile spinner imparts a very rapid rotatory motion. When a rapid dashes into a pool there is usually a back eddy, and the current flows up-stream at the side of the rapid. It is in this side-water that it is very important to spin your bait; and, as old Isaac says, "if he spin not, ye be like to catch nothing."

Personally I always used a Malloch reel, as, in the Giri and the rivers of this class which I usually fished, accurate casting was of more importance than the mere length of the line thrown. The necessity for turning the reel is a drawback; and on the Namsen River in Norway I found that, amid the more confused and plunging struggle which occurs with a salmon, the reel is not unlikely to jam, or the line to loop round it. With the straightforward, headlong rush of the mahser, however, the reel works well; and practice soon enables you to get over the turning difficulty. It is not often that a mahser takes on the moment of the bait striking the water.

For traces I generally used the Killin single-wire steel trace, which can--or, perhaps I should say, could—be bought for a shilling; and I invented a method of testing these traces which I found very effective. In the morning, before going out fishing, I used to send one of my men up a tree with one end of the trace, and the other

end was attached to a bag or bundle containing 12 or 14 lbs. of stones. The stones, when lifted sharply by the hand two or three times from the ground, put a strain on a trace, which is much more like the sudden tug of a big fish than the usual method of testing it to pull a certain number of pounds on a balance. The testing of these traces is all-important. I have found by experience that a trace which will for several days lift 14 lbs. with ease will, in time, become unreliable and will readily break under the same test.

Farlow's plaited wire traces, which I sometimes used in big water, will hold a crocodile, and I have never known one of Farlow's swivels to fail; but in clear water, if you want to catch fish, you must fish fine and far off, and must keep yourself concealed as far as possible. In places where mahser are unsophisticated and water has not been much fished, any tackle is good enough, as a mahser on the take is a bold, fierce fish; but where mahser have become acquainted with baits they are very shy, and, except on a day when they are all taking eagerly, they are not readily deceived. I have seen a mahser of 5 or 6 lbs. sail up to my bait in clear water and have a good look at it at close quarters, and then pass it by. A salmon, or sea trout, does not appear to concern himself with the fate of his fellows in a pool; but this is not the case with the mahser, and the struggles of a captive excite either sympathy or curiosity.

The hook that mahser cannot break has yet to be made. When a fish takes the bait in

comparatively still water he usually pouches it and you feel the hooks go home; but when your bait is working in strong water, it is sometimes seized with great violence and hooks are often crunched, or one or both of the flights are wrenched off the spinner. It was this fierce tug that was to me one of the joys of the game. The power of compression possessed by the mouth of a mahser is amazing. He has three rows of teeth in the lower jaw, but I do not think these are used, and the damage has always appeared to me to be done by the hard roof of the mouth. I have frequently had hooks crunched by comparatively small fish, and one of the safest holds you can have is in the skin of the lips outside the mouth. I have lost very few fish by the hold breaking out, as the skin is very strong.

When a fish takes your bait and goes to the bottom of the river without running, he should be dislodged. A strong pull down-stream will generally dislodge a fish, but if this is ineffectual he should, if possible, be forced to move by stone-throwing, or by sending your attendant into the pool. If he is allowed to remain undisturbed, he will almost inevitably play havoc with the tackle. A fish which has run hard apparently becomes too blown to permit of his bringing the same pressure on the hooks.

When fish are not taking well they often dash at the bait and make a sad mess both of the bait and spinner, without hooking themselves; but the only remedy for this is patience.

In the spring and autumn you may fish all day, but the middle of the day, when the temperature

in the sun is about 165 degrees Fahrenheit and the water becomes warm, is usually a better time than the early morning, at any rate in rivers where the pools in the early morning are in shade and the water coming down from the high hills is cold. Another very favourite time of mine was sundown. It is a good plan to arrange your day's fishing so that you may be at a good pool about sunset. In the hot weather when the Giri was low and very clear, I have caught good fish after dark; but this, so far as my experience goes, is exceptional; and when the sun goes down and the after-glow is off the water, it is time to knock off.

In rivers which have been much fished a little colour in the water is desirable, and even if the colour is produced by snow-water it is much better than no colour at all. As is the case with salmon fishing, the best time in such rivers is after a spate, when the water has begun to clear, but is still sufficiently discoloured to prevent the fish from seeing the tackle. Where the fish are unsophisticated perfectly clear water may be an advantage, as Mr. Thomas says in *The Rod in India*, because the bait can be seen to a greater distance; but in a river like the Giri you can only hope to catch big fish when the water is clear, either in the strong water of the rapids, or by fishing late in the evening. When the water is discoloured the mahser are unable to see the bait unless it passes close to them; but, if they do see the bait, they take it well under such conditions. The junctions of small streams with the main river fish well at such a time. The

smallest trickle of clear water, when the river is dirty, offers an attraction, and the fish lie near the junction.

As a friend once remarked, I am very conservative in my habits, and it is now a matter of regret to me that I did not do more tank fishing for rohu in India. It is good sport, and good fish can be caught in this way. On one occasion I fished a tank in the Hoshiarpur District, and caught two fine rohu of 12 lbs. and 14 lbs. I then hooked a fish which must, from the swirl of the water, have been a monster, and which smashed the tackle which had landed the other two fish at the first rush. But, as the Emperor Shah Jehan wrote to his sons: "Shikar kar i bekaranast" (Shikar is the business of men who have nothing to do). And I found it impossible to devote to sport all the time that I would have liked to devote to it. I played hard whenever opportunity offered, and, being very energetic, I managed to find time for a good deal of sport; but I worked very hard in the course of my service in India, especially in the twelve years from 1885 to 1897.

On the occasion referred to in the preceding chapter, when I first fished the Ram Ganga in the Patli Dun, a mahser of 27 lbs. took out all my line and very nearly defeated me. I hooked him in a rapid at the head of a long deep pool, along the side of which there had been a landslip and travelling was difficult. The fish made a good run down into the pool and I followed, never dreaming that he would leave the pool, which was both long and deep. To my horror

I saw my line moving rapidly to the place where the pool ended in a tremendous rapid, and, though I scrambled vigorously over the debris of the landslip, he was into this rapid before I cleared the pool. Down the rapid he went, and over 200 yards of line was out before I could get clear. There was dead water at the end of the pool, and I plunged wildly into this; but fortunately swimming was unnecessary, and I managed to get on terms with the fish, who had worn himself out by his efforts.

When hauled ashore, a mahser lies like a log, and it is easy for a man to put his hands round his head and haul him in. I never used net or gaff, and Buta, the Drai, who handled fish for me in the Bias, never failed to land a fish. Some dexterity is, however, necessary, or fingers may be crunched.

The Ban junction of the Poonch River is a place to be remembered. There is a long rapid in the Poonch at the junction, fairly slow at the beginning, but ending in strong white water. Half-way down the rapid there is a great rock on the bank of the river, jutting out into the stream; and, unless you have a boat, if a fish passes this rock you are done. Even with a boat it is exciting work. The boatmen have to row wildly to turn the boat out of the rapid to the shore, and then to spring into the strong water of the rapid up to their middles to hold the boat; and during this time your line may be flying out down the rapid, and even across the pool below, if the fish makes for the next rapid beyond. I went down the first rapid, across the pool, and

down the second rapid with a 17-pounder, and wish it had been my luck to do it with one of 30 lbs.

I personally never caught any very big mahser. I caught a fish of 42 lbs. in the Giri and several fish of 30 lbs. more or less, and I also caught in the Giri, and the Giri junction with the Jumna, goonch of 70 and 68 lbs., the latter of which did not sulk and showed good sport, taking me down the river for several hundred yards. Colonel Downman caught a mahser of 54 lbs. in the Giri ; and this is, I think, the record for the river. But mahser unquestionably run to a great size ; and fish over 100 lbs. in weight have, as I understand, been caught in the tributaries of the Cauvery River in Madras, and fish up to 90 lbs. in the Irrawaddy River in Burmah. I have heard also of a mahser of 80 lbs. being caught in the Bias.

The fish you lose are always bigger than the fish you catch ; and two days are very vividly impressed upon my memory. The first was a day in autumn on the Bias, and I was fishing near the famous rock in the river at Changarvan, a noted lie for big fish when the water at this spot is favourable. All Indian rivers alter much from season to season, and in the Giri the pool, where Colonel Downman caught his 54-pounder, was nearly dry two years afterwards. An enormous fish took my bait, just by the rock. He did not dash off, as a mahser usually does, but wallowed about for some time, giving me ample opportunity to feel his weight ; and I called out triumphantly in Hindustani : " I have got a fish this time." Then he made a rush down-

stream and checked in deep water near the left bank of the river. I was in a boat, and dropped down to him, recovering my line until I was close to the fish. Along the left bank of the river there were jagged rocks; and Changan Singh, the officer in charge of the ferries, who often accompanied the late Mr. Bruere and myself on fishing expeditions, and who was very keen about the sport, had seen a line cut more than once upon these rocks. He suggested, therefore, that we should cross to the other bank, which was shelving and sandy. The right bank looked very tempting, and I fell into the snare, and we started across. The stream was strong, and as I paid out line I lost contact with the fish, and when I began to reel up the trace was broken. The fish must have availed himself of the slack line to fix the trace on a rock and so get a dead pull; and when a big, unexhausted fish gets a dead pull, no fine tackle can stand the strain. I ought to have tried to frighten the fish and start him off again, as another rush would have carried him past the rocks into safety, and my strategy was badly at fault. I never quite forgave Changan Singh for having played the part of Satan on this occasion; and, if he is still in the land of the living, I am sure he will remember the incident.

The other day of wrath was a day in the spring on the Giri. I was fishing the water between Mandal and Sattawan, which was, that year, in fine order, and I hooked a large fish in white water at the head of a long pool. He moved off down the pool like a man of war, not with the

usual violent rush, but at a good, steady pace, inclining to the left bank of the river, from which I was fishing. There was a tree in the river near this bank, which had been carried down by a flood, and at the time my only anxiety was that the fish might foul this tree. When he passed it I thought that he was mine, but the fish had other ideas on the subject. As he approached the rapid at the head of the pool below he shot across to the right bank and went down the rapid with incredible speed and broke the trace, which presumably touched a stone. The slightest check, when a big fish is running, is fatal. I made no mistake on this occasion, and the fish fairly beat me.

A friend of mine told me a story of a Bengali Babu, who had fished for some weeks without success in one of the tanks at Calcutta, and who at last hooked and successfully played a very large fish. The boy with him put the landing-net under the fish, but the fish was heavy and the net was rotten, and the fish went through the bottom of the net and disappeared. The Babu gave the boy a sound box on the ear, and then burst into tears. I did not cry, but I have not yet got over these two disappointments. The Bias fish in particular, was, I am sure, a very large one.

In some parts of India fishing can not be described as a gentle art. I spent the Christmas of the year 1904 with my friend Mr. (now Sir Henry) Wheler, at the rest-house on the Bombay side of the famous Gairsappa Falls, a beautiful spot between Bombay-Canara and Mysore,

which is not visited by sightseers as often as it deserves. There were tigers about, and we had an unsuccessful beat for a tiger; but I spent most of the time fishing. On one day, as we were approaching the river, Mihtab Khan drew my attention to the skin of a very large snake, which had recently been cast. I did not pay much attention, but went on to the river and began to fish. There was a long, low rock in the stream, three or four yards from the right bank on which I was; and I waded in and began to fish from behind the rock. I had made a few casts when Mihtab Khan shrieked out: "Come here, come here!" I turned, rather annoyed with him for startling me, and, as I turned, my eyes fell upon an enormous snake, which was lying curled up sound asleep upon the lowest portion of the rock, with the water lapping the coils on either side. I retreated hastily enough and armed myself with a stout walking-stick which had been given to me at Forsinard, in Scotland, and then returned to the snake. The head was hidden and I did not know where to strike. "Leave him alone," counselled Mihtab Khan, but this I absolutely refused to do; and, while the snake slumbered peacefully, we organised a combined attack. Mihtab Khan and a Bombay peon, who was with us, armed themselves with big sticks, and we advanced together. At a signal from me, the three sticks landed with a whack on the sleeping snake; and, as he uncoiled, the head appeared, and I bashed it to pieces with my stick. We dragged him through the water and stretched him out. The length was

fully four times that of my walking-stick, which was a long one, so that he was at least 12 feet long. The head was that of a poisonous snake; the neck was rather thicker round than a man's wrist, and the body was considerably larger. The coloration was magnificent; the body was glossy black flecked with some white streaks, and the throat and the upper part of the belly was a brilliant orange shading into yellow. I had had no previous experience of hamadryads, but have seen and killed numbers of snakes, and have always taken an interest in them; and I studied the hamadryads in the Calcutta Zoological Gardens very carefully after this incident, and am sure that the snake was a very fine specimen of the hamadryad. It was most assuredly not a python. The head of all the Pythonidæ is quite different in shape from the head of the Thanatophidia. I regret, however, that I did not take the skin, though I had bashed the head so completely to pieces that, as a specimen, it would have been imperfect. I wished to take the snake to the rest-house to show to Mr. Wheler, but the native boatman absolutely refused to have it in the boat upon any terms, and it was accordingly left on the ground. For two days it lay there and became decidedly odoriferous. On the morning of the third day, when I passed the spot on my way up-river, it was gone. Some animal or animals had apparently eaten it, but I certainly did not envy them their repast.

I have not heard of a large hamadryad being killed with a stick by anyone else; but we took an unfair advantage of this one.

The country adjoining the Ram Ganga was full of tigers and other animals, and even on the Giri in the middle and the lower reaches of the river the fisherman was in touch with wild life. On one occasion, when I arrived at the Anu camping-ground, I was informed that a man and his wife had been attacked by a bear as they were collecting wood in the jungle, and that the man was dead and the woman's life was despaired of. On another occasion, when I arrived at Sattibagh with my friend Colonel Triscott, who often accompanied me on fishing expeditions, we were informed that a panther was giving trouble in the vicinity. The animal passed up a nullah at the back of our tents on the first night that we were there, uttering the curious sawing roar which is characteristic of a panther; and a night or two after this he took a boy out of a hut within 200 yards of the tents. The boy was sleeping in the hut with his uncle in charge of some goats, and the panther dashed in through the door and seized the boy by the head, as he was lying among the goats, and dragged him out. It is probable that the boy was seized in mistake for a goat, as, when an outcry was raised by the boy and his uncle, the panther dropped him and bolted. The boy was brought to our tents at dawn in a semi-comatose condition, bleeding from wounds made by two of the canine teeth in the cheek and the scalp. The other two canine teeth appeared to have missed their hold. Colonel Triscott had a medicine-chest, and was handy with his fingers; so he washed the boy's face, cut away some of the hair, checked the

bleeding with tannin, and then put iodoform on the wounds. The place was a Sub-Divisional Headquarters, and the officer in charge sent us, on application, a string-bed and four men, and we started the boy off to the hospital at Nahan, which was only 17 miles away uphill. Within a month he was back in his home completely cured, having escaped blood poisoning. The boy probably owed his life to Colonel Triscott, and the Medical Officer in charge of the Nahan Hospital expressed warm approval of the manner in which the case had been treated. I sat up for the panther over a bait on the following evening, but without success.

An Indian by the name of Waris, who was, and perhaps still is, the headman of the village of Mari, opposite Kalabagh, on the Indus, invented a novel and ingenious method of capturing mahser. Into a smooth-bored gun he fitted a barbed arrow, which projected about four inches from the muzzle, and to the arrow below the head he attached a coil of strong cord. The gun was loaded in the ordinary way, but with half a charge of gunpowder, and the cord was kept in a coil at the fisherman's side. In the spring season the fry make their way up the Indus, hugging the bank as they go, and the big mahser raid the shoals in their upward progress, rocks on the bank projecting into the stream being a favourite place of attack. During an attack a big fish often shows himself upon the surface. Armed with his gear, Waris would lie, with the unwearied patience of the Oriental, upon a rock watching the stream until a fish showed

himself, when he would fire the arrow into his body. The rush of the stricken fish across the Indus was, as he said, fine sport, and I have no doubt it was. When the fish had made his rush, he hauled him in with the cord.

Waris said he had caught fish in this way up to 50 lbs. in weight, and that he found the sport so fascinating that he had given up all other shooting. I did not actually see any fish caught in this way, and I was not at Mari in the right season of the year; but the arrow was fired at my request into the water, and the gear appeared to work well.

The Indian is often a tremendously keen shikari, though he is not very sportsmanlike, according to our ideas, in his methods. His object is to bag the animal, fish, or bird he is in pursuit of; and it appears to him to be folly to give the prey a chance to escape. The most fastidious of sportsmen, however, could not take exception to Waris's methods.

CHAPTER V

MY FIRST EXPEDITION TO BRITISH EAST AFRICA

My friend, Mr. W. B. M. Bird, had arranged to shoot in East Africa in the early part of the year 1906, and had asked Mr. A. Wood to accompany him on the expedition; and, as I was proceeding to England on furlough in the autumn of 1905, Mr. Bird kindly invited me to join the party, and the invitation was very readily accepted. We left England shortly after Christmas 1905, and arrived at Mombassa in East Africa on the 13th January, 1906.

The case containing Bird's rifles and shot-gun had been sent by mistake to Beira; and for some weeks Bird was obliged to shoot with borrowed rifles. All the other cases containing our outfit and stores arrived safely, and the mishap was therefore particularly annoying.

My battery consisted of a D.B. ·450 cordite rifle and a Rigby-Mauser magazine rifle, which I purchased from John Rigby & Co. for the occasion; and with the Rigby-Mauser I had a telescope-sight, but this got out of order after a few weeks' shooting.

Bird had employed Mr. Judd, an experienced elephant-hunter, to engage gun-bearers, servants, and porters, and make the necessary preliminary

MESSRS. BIRD, WOOD, AND THE AUTHOR.

arrangements for the expedition; and, as Judd had frequently hunted in the Aberdare or Settima hills, and had established friendly relations with some of the Kikuyu hunters, Naivasha was made our headquarters.

Other arrangements had been made, but no riding animals had been purchased; and, as it was the hottest time of the year, and no one of us was young, this was rather a serious matter. We trudged on foot, however, round the Naivasha Lake, and had a very pleasant and interesting trip.

A Berthon boat formed part of our equipment, and we spent several days shooting hippotamuses from this boat on the lake. The portion of the head which is exposed when a hippo rises to the surface to breathe is not large, but I was successful in hitting my hippo at the first attempt. In the afternoon it was found in the papyrus fringing the lake in a moribund condition, and was finished off by Bird. The sport did not particularly appeal to me, but it was exceedingly popular with our porters and with all the natives in the vicinity. The hippo and the eland appear to be the only animals in Africa which have any fat, and the three hippos we shot provided a series of banquets, which were much appreciated.

We had good shooting at antelope in the course of the trip, particularly on the Longonot plain. We halted there for some days and sent Judd to Nairobi to purchase some riding animals for us. The continuous marching on foot was fatiguing, and occupied time which might have been devoted more profitably to hunting.

While we were at Longonot Bird had a shot at a lion, which had taken possession of the carcase of a hartebeest, shot by Wood on the previous day, and had dragged it into some bushes. The lion galloped away on Bird's approach, and he fired at it unsuccessfully. He followed the track of the lion, with the assistance of his gun-bearer, for a considerable distance, and had a second chance; but he was shooting with a borrowed rifle, and either missed or only slightly wounded the animal. We all turned out in the afternoon and followed the track for a considerable distance; but we saw him no more.

From Nairobi Judd returned with a pony and a very good mule, and we purchased a Masai donkey at Naivasha. This made travelling much more pleasurable. An occasional ride, even for a short distance, saves you from leg-weariness, and also saves you from becoming uncomfortably thirsty. Up to a point, it is pleasant enough to "raise a thirst," as Mr. Kipling describes it, but when your mouth and throat are absolutely parched thirst detracts very much from the pleasure of a shooting expedition. The pony fell sick and died very soon after we bought him, but the mule and the donkey were very useful.

From Naivasha we marched to the Aberdare Mountains on the 5th of February, and, camping in a place at the foot of the mountains about 21 miles from Naivasha, we began a hunt for elephants.

Rhinoceroses were fairly numerous in the vicinity, though they did not appear to carry

JUDD TOWING DEAD HIPPO.

good horns; and, while the Kikuyu hunters employed by Judd were trying to find elephants, we hunted rhinos and other game. We knew each other well, and Judd was an interesting and instructive companion, so that we had a very pleasant time; but three is not a good number for a shooting party. Two men can shoot comfortably without interfering with each other, but it is difficult for a third man to shoot without interfering with the sport of the others, or without being interfered with in his own stalking and shooting. The chances, also, which are to be got at elephants are few; and much of the time which we spent at the foot of the mountains was not very profitably employed. In the vicinity of our first two camps elephants were fairly numerous, and in the first week each of us had a chance of bagging an elephant. We then, however, marched and camped for ten days along the foot of the hills without getting any more chances at elephant, and the other shooting was not particularly good. The country was pleasant, and one of our camps was beautifully situated, with a fine view of Mount Kinangop in the distance; but the rains had commenced in the hill country, and our shooting was interfered with to some extent by heavy showers.

When the elephant-shooting was over at the end of February my friends had not much more time at their disposal, and Bird was anxious to see the Victoria Nyanza before leaving the country. They decided, therefore, to spend some days on the Athi River. I was anxious to travel to a greater distance from the railway-line than

we had done up to this time; and accordingly obtained a permit to enter Laikipia, which was then reserved country for the Masai.

Taking leave of my friends, I started on the 2nd of March for the Boma, or headquarters station in Laikipia, with Mr. Black, a hunter friend of Judd's, whom we fell in with when we were at one of our camps in the elephant country, and who kindly undertoook to control the Kikuyu porters. As I proposed to march to a considerable distance from the railway, my friends very unselfishly gave me the mule and the donkey, so that both Black and myself might be able to ride. The gun-bearer, whom Judd had engaged for me, had not been a success, and was, moreover, entirely ignorant of English. In his place, therefore, I took, as gun-bearer, one of the tent-boys, who went by the name of Johnny, and who could talk a little English. I had also picked up and employed an Indian by the name of Imam ud Din, and had a Muhammadan body-servant; so that, so far as my personal wants were concerned, I was well provided for.

Black was a capital fellow; but, before we had proceeded far, he happened to meet an officer from the Boma, who informed him that if he entered Laikipia he would be arrested, as his name was not in the permit. In the circumstances Black was constrained to return, and, leaving the mule and the donkey with me, he walked back to Naivasha.

This misadventure interfered with the success of the expedition. Johnny, the tent-boy, and

A KIKUYU WARRIOR.

the Kikuyu porters, had all been engaged by Judd; and, not unnaturally, looked upon me as an outsider. The Kikuyu also is a poor-spirited creature; and, as Abdu, the Somali headman who had charge of the porters on my second expedition, contemptuously said, is only fit to cultivate a field. In the vicinity of his home, with people who know and understand him, he is tractable, and he is certainly a very good porter, and takes good care of his load. He has not, however, the pluck and enterprise of the Swahili, the Wakamba, the Kavirondo, or the Baganda, and is not a good man for a long journey, as he soon becomes homesick and wishes to return. I had, therefore, a good deal of trouble with the porters. My ignorance of the language made it difficult for me to control them, and I was not as firm with them as I should have been. I managed, however, to reach the Boma, and did some shooting round the Pezi swamp beyond the Boma; but the porters absolutely refused to go any farther.

Bird also was anxious to see me before leaving the country, and I accordingly reluctantly retraced my steps and marched to meet him at Nakuro in the Rift valley to the west of Naivasha. I heard a lion one night when I was in camp near the Pezi swamp, but did not see one.

At the Boma there was a sergeant from a British infantry regiment, who was drilling the Swahili Police. He informed me that not long before he had successfully treated a Masai who had come to the Boma with his arm badly mauled by a lion. The Masai, according to his own

account, had attacked the lion single-handed with his assegai and his shield, and had succeeded in killing him, though his arm was badly bitten. The wounds had suppurated, but the man escaped blood-poisoning, and the arm recovered under simple antiseptic treatment. A lion's mane is much prized as a headdress by a Masai warrior, but, if the man told the truth, his action in attacking the lion single-handed with a spear and shield was a very gallant one.

Before we reached the Boma we lost the donkey. After Black's departure I had both the mule and the donkey; and, as I walked a great deal, and, when I did ride, generally rode the mule, the donkey did not get sufficient exercise. The donkey, who was receiving a feed of grain every day, became in consequence somewhat obstreperous. On the day before we reached the Boma, a herd of zebras, seeing the donkey and apparently recognising a kinsman, came within 40 or 50 yards of him and began barking. Roused at this, the donkey wrenched the bridle from Imam ud Din's hand, and dashed in pursuit of the zebras, who fled at his approach. It was a most amusing sight, and, although I was annoyed with the man for letting him go, and thought that I might have difficulty in recovering him, I could not help laughing. The saddle was on his back and the bridle in his mouth, and he galloped into space in pursuit of the zebras, and I saw him no more. I sent Imam ud Din after him, but he appeared at the Boma about five p.m. and said that he had not been able to catch him. At nightfall he would have had a better chance,

80] A KIKUYU MAIDEN.

but he was evidently afraid to remain out alone on the plain.

In the morning I sent Masai to look for him, but they were unable to find him. The zebras may have turned upon him and killed him, but it is more probable that he was killed by a lion.

On my return journey from the Boma to the railway at Nakuro, I had an unpleasant experience. I was marching as usual, with Johnny and two of the Kikuyu, in front of the porters, and the path or track we were following led through a large open plain. I ought to have stopped and waited for the porters, but a man whom we met pointed out a track, which, as he said, led to Nakuro, and we marched on. We were then within 40 or 50 miles of Nakuro. It was about 9 a.m. and we marched until noon, when I selected a suitable place for a camp and sat down and had a light lunch, a fragment of Paysandu tongue and a few *petit beurre* biscuits, and a drink of lime-juice and water. At about 1 p.m. I told Johnny to go and look for the porters, as they usually arrived at the camping-ground about one hour after we did; but he was lazy, and made some excuse and did not go. At 3 p.m. matters were beginning to look serious, and I sent the two Kikuyu to see what had happened. In a short time they returned, and it was clear to me, from their manner and bearing, that they had not seen the porters. We accordingly started back along the track, and after going for some distance met a native, who was camping out alone in the forest, and he and Johnny

had a conversation. Stupidly, however, Johnny would not admit even then the seriousness of the situation, and said that there was another Safari (party of travellers) in the vicinity, and that we would go to their camp. Thinking that he had heard this from the native with whom he had been in conversation, I made no demur, and we pushed on ; and at nightfall we reached the large open plain where the mistake about the road had evidently occurred. In the middle of this plain night came upon us with tropical suddenness, and Johnny, after lighting one or two matches in an aimless and bewildered manner, turned to me and said : " This good place : we stay here." It was an unpleasant situation, but my sense of humour was tickled by the remark, and I laughingly replied that it was anything but a good place, but that I agreed that we must stop where we were. We proceeded, therefore, to make the best of it. It was the month of March, and even in the plains the rains had begun, and, shortly after we halted, it began to drizzle. I seated myself on the saddle of the mule with my big rifle across my knees ; and, as it was lion country, I had the mule tethered in close proximity, and the three negroes lay on the ground beside me. We were at an elevation of about 7,000 feet, and the night was decidedly chilly, but I had a Burberry coat, and also, what I consider to be an indispensable item of a traveller's equipment in damp weather, a good stout umbrella. Fortunately also, seeing that it was likely to rain, I had put on that morning a somewhat thicker vest than

I had before been wearing, under my thin khaki shooting suit. I endured therefore until the dawn without any ill effects, but I was exceedingly cold and uncomfortable. Sleep for me was out of the question, but the three negroes huddled together on the ground and slept peacefully. When one of them in the night rolled against me in his sleep, the warmth from his body was so grateful that I did not shove him away. If Johnny had admitted the seriousness of the situation, I should have made a camp in the forest country; and there, under a tree with a fire, the experience would not have been so unpleasant; but, as it was, I had a very bad night. I had nothing to eat, but drank about a tumblerful of lime-juice and water.

In the morning the drizzle stopped, and we picked up the track of our "Safari." The ·450 rifle, which was on my knees, was all right, owing to the protection afforded by the umbrella; but Johnny had placed the Rigby-Mauser on the ground outside the cloth covering which the negroes made for themselves out of their clothes, and it was very badly rusted, and this was an additional cause of annoyance. Buoyed up with hopes of breakfast, however, we followed the track of the Safari; but when, at about 10 a.m., we arrived at the place where the men had spent the night, we found, much to our disappointment and disgust, that they had struck the tents and marched on in the direction of Nakuro. My Indian servant was, I think, responsible for this piece of stupidity.

The only thing to be done was to follow, and we

kept on the move all day. For some time we followed the track of the Safari, but in the course of the day we lost the track and made as direct a line for Nakuro as we could. Having the mule, I was able to ride whenever I felt unpleasantly heated, and this was a great assistance. It drizzled off and on during the day, and in the afternoon we had a thunderstorm and heavy tropical rain, which made my feet and legs very wet in spite of the Burberry coat and the umbrella.

After the storm we reached the crest of the slope descending into the Rift Valley and saw Nakuro, like the promised land, in the distance. The road then lay through thick elephant bush, and we came to a place which was honeycombed with tracks of elephants. I was not at the time at all anxious to have a battle with an elephant, and fortunately we did not meet any.

We came across very little game on the way, but in the evening we saw some hartebeest. I might have hunted and shot some animal and broiled some of the meat, but we certainly could not have provided anything appetising, and my one desire was to avoid, if possible, the discomfort of another night on the ground. By steady travelling I hoped that it might be possible to reach Nakuro before nightfall, and we therefore kept on the march all day. The want of food caused me surprisingly little inconvenience, and I simply tightened my belt and pushed on. The dampness of the air and an occasional ride on the mule saved me from thirst, and this was a great point. At one time during the day I saw

some mushrooms, which appeared to be edible, but refrained from eating them. I felt that I had sufficient strength, even without food, to reach Nakuro, provided that I kept well, and an attack of indisposition might have been fatal.

At 6 p.m. we were still in thick bush, and it was clear that we had no chance of reaching Nakuro that night. We therefore collected some firewood and prepared for another night on the ground. I had no matches, not being a smoker, but Johnny fortunately had a few; and with some difficulty, as the wood was very damp, we managed to light a fire. I dried my damp clothes as well as I could at the fire, drank the last of my lime-juice and water, about half a tumblerful, and lay down. Johnny had some corn-cobs, and the Kikuyu had some dried meat, which they had carried along with them. They cut the meat into strips and offered me some, but I declined with thanks. I doubt if I could have eaten any of it, if I had fasted for a week.

The night was dry, and the three negroes, who were evidently very tired, slept soundly. It devolved upon me to get up at intervals and attend to the fire, as the negroes slept like logs. It was very cold after the rain, but I warmed each side of my body in turn. I had also some sleep, and the night was a great improvement on the preceding one.

At the first streak of dawn I roused the negroes, and we started full of hope for Nakuro. The mule got loose during the night and strayed for some distance, but we found her in the morning. For three full hours we travelled through thick

elephant bush, the only paths in which were the tracks made by animals; and, as many of the tracks had no exit, we were constantly obliged to retrace our steps and try some other line. The mule also had to be flogged over fallen trees and other obstacles. It was hard work, and when we emerged into the open I felt somewhat exhausted. The plain of the Rift Valley was, however, in sight, and after a rest I got up and continued the journey.

As we entered the plain we saw our porters descending the steep slope into the valley by another track, we having overtaken and passed them on the road. The headman of the Kikuyu shook hands with me warmly, and I was so glad to see them that I found no great fault either with them or my servants for their stupidity in running away. After a biscuit and a glass of port wine, I continued the march to Nakuro. While I was making for the railway station I met a gentleman and lady very smartly dressed, and the gentleman came and spoke to me, causing me considerable embarrassment. Unwashed and unshaven as I was, I must have presented a most disreputable appearance. Even the Swahili Johnny, though he had fared better than I had, both in the matter of food and sleep, showed most evident traces of the experience. I explained, however, what had happened, and kept out of the lady's way. At Nakuro I had a meal, but did not eat appreciably more than usual, and the adventure had no ill effect upon me.

I got up the next morning at 4 a.m. to meet the train by which Bird was expected to arrive

BIRD WITH DEAD WILDEBEEST.

from the Victoria Nyanza, and had to wait at the station until 3 p.m., as the train was delayed; but the long wait at the station was not specially irksome. About a tumblerful and a half of lime-juice and water was all that passed my lips in forty-seven hours, and in the preceding sixteen hours I had eaten very little. As already said, however, the fast caused me surprisingly little inconvenience; but the discomfort of the two cold, damp nights upon the ground was very great.

After settling up matters with Bird at Naivasha and saying good-bye to him on the 25th of March, I moved camp to the Elmenteita railway station, and hunted the plain there for some days. At Elmenteita I made the acquaintance of Mr. Chamberlain, a colonist who had a large grant of land in the vicinity, and who kindly gave me permission to shoot upon his ground. In one part of the estate which he indicated Mr. Chamberlain had, as he informed me, come upon several lions in the grass. They stood and looked at him for some time; and, as he was entirely unarmed, it was an unpleasant adventure. But eventually they moved off. In dry weather the place probably was a favourite haunt for lions, as it was low-lying and the cover was dense, and the Elmenteita plain, upon which there was much game, was within easy access. When I was there, however, the rains had begun and the ground was partly flooded, and the lions had evidently sought drier quarters. I hunted the ground carefully, two or three times, but saw no signs of them.

By this time it was raining heavily, and, although it was always possible to shoot for some part of the day, the ground near the station was low-lying, and the flood water could only be kept out of my tent by an elaborate system of trenches. The discomfort, in the circumstances, was considerable. As soon, therefore, as Judd returned from a short holiday which he had taken after seeing Bird off at Mombassa, we moved camp to a place on the railway between Elmenteita and Gilgil. There was an Indian gangman at this place, who informed me that it was often visited by lions. There were lions in the neighbourhood; and if I had hunted them assiduously, and refrained from other shooting, I might have got a shot. There were mountain reed-buck, however, on the extinct craters of volcanoes near the railway, which offered attractive shooting, and Judd thought that a few shots at them would make no difference, and I was only too ready to take the same view. I came to the conclusion afterwards that we were mistaken in this, as the Indian gangman told me that on one evening he saw a lion, which was travelling towards the place where I was at the time, but which altered its direction when I fired a shot. Judd and Johnny also, on another occasion, saw a lioness slink away when I fired at an antelope. We followed in pursuit, but she was not seen again.

I saw a leopard one morning, when I was hunting with Judd at this place, the only one I saw in the course of two expeditions to Africa; but the beast would not allow me to approach

near enough to shoot. I personally saw no lions. We had a good dry camp, and the rain-water, collected from the corrugated iron roof of the hut occupied by the workmen employed on the railway, was the best water I had tasted in the course of the expedition. Some of the water we drank from lake Nainasha was very bad, the papyrus roots imparting to it a most nauseating flavour; but when filtered it did not appear to be unwholesome. With the exception of the reed-buck, however, there was not much game in the vicinity, and as soon as we had hunted all the ground we moved camp again.

I had about ten days more at my disposal, and a lion was the animal which I particularly wished to shoot, so I went from Gilgil, with a few Kikuyu porters, to the Simba railway station, which is a noted place for lions. Judd followed me in a day or two. I arrived at Simba late in the evening, and slept in the waiting-room in the station, and the porters slept in the verandah. The station-master said that no lions had been heard of near the station for six months, but during that night a lioness and cub walked past the station on the railway-line within a few feet of the sleeping porters.

If the weather had permitted of our sitting up in a machan I think we should have bagged that lioness, but the rains were by this time so heavy that a night out of doors might have involved appalling discomfort. The nights also were cloudy and very dark. I shot a hartebeest, and we made the porters drag the carcase across country to a disused plate-layer's house on the

railway-line near the station; and there we tied it to the railing of the verandah. In the morning the hartebeest had vanished, and examination showed that the lioness and her cub, and also hyænas, had visited the kill. The lion apparently hunts a great deal by scent. The tiger, being a forest animal, trusts almost entirely to sight and hearing.

On the next day Judd shot another hartebeest, and we repeated the experiment, and Judd and I sat on chairs in the house in front of a wooden-barred window. The night was so dark that we were obliged to tie the carcase to the verandah, so that it was not more than five yards from us; and the window, through which we had to shoot, was higher than our chairs. When moving our rifles, therefore, it was almost impossible to help touching with them the bars of the window, and, when sitting up over a kill, any noise of this kind is fatal. I have an extended experience of mosquitoes, but shall always remember the mosquitoes of Simba with respect. We were not far, however, from being successful. Some hyænas came first to the kill; and then, fairly early in the night, we heard the lioness announce her arrival with a growl, and the hyænas scampered away in terror. The lioness, however, evidently detected our presence and would not approach the carcase, and we sat there until the dawn without result.

On the following night, at the suggestion of the pointsman, who posed with some reason as an authority in the matter of lions, I sat up under the water-tank of the station, with a goat

90] GRANTII AND THOMSONII GAZELLES.

belonging to the pointsman tied out as a bait; The goat, however, appeared to have played the game before; and, without bleating or making any noise, curled itself up and went to sleep. Not even a hyæna appeared, while I was again devoured by mosquitoes.

This ended the hunt. I saw some eland at Simba, but the general shooting was not good. From my camp I had some beautiful views of the peaks of Kilima-Njaro appearing through the clouds; but the frequent heavy showers made life very uncomfortable. I therefore accepted defeat, and left the country. I had had some good shooting, and had enjoyed myself very much, but I had gone to Africa mainly to shoot lions, and had not succeeded in doing so, and the expedition was therefore to this extent a failure. I was in the country altogether for a little more than three months. Some photographs taken by Mr. Bird in the course of the expedition have been reproduced as illustrations.

While shooting round Lake Naivasha and in Laikipia and at Elmenteita I shot very good specimens of water-buck, and Grantii and Thomsonii gazelles, and of the Nakuro or Neumann's hybrid hartebeest, and Coke's hartebeest. I shot a particularly good Thomsonii gazelle, the horns measuring $15\frac{3}{4}$ inches. This was for a time the second best head shot in East Africa, but has now fallen to number six on the list in the last edition of Rowland Ward's *Records of Big Game*; I shot two others with horns which measure $14\frac{7}{8}$ and $14\frac{1}{4}$ inches. One of my Neumann's

hybrid hartebeest heads also, the horns of which measure 21 inches on the front curve, is only short of the record (22 inches) by an inch, and figures as number 11 on Rowland Ward's latest list. Two other heads of this hartebeest which I shot measure 20 inches and 19 inches; and one of these is a finer head than the one in Rowland Ward's list, though the horns are not quite so long.

I had also an interesting experience with antelope in the course of this expedition. I have seen it stated that the elephant is the only animal which comes to the assistance of its fellows when they are in distress. The remark was evidently not intended to apply to monkeys and baboons, and I personally witnessed a case of intervention in the interest of a comrade by a hartebeest bull.

I had put a bullet from my ·450 cordite rifle into a fine Coke's hartebeest bull. It was impossible to get near to the herd, and I had fired from a great distance, fully 300 yards, using the heavy rifle in the hope of giving a knock-out blow. The bull was standing dazed, and I was closing in upon him to finish him off, when another bull in the herd came behind him, and butted him vigorously in the stern until he compelled him to move off with the others. When a wounded hartebeest begins to gallop the endurance of the animal is so great that he will probably get away from you, even if he is mortally wounded, and I saw the bull no more. The wounded animal may have subsequently succumbed, but the other bull certainly made a determined attempt to save his comrade's life.

Among the gazelles there is no chivalry of this kind. On two occasions I wounded Thomsonii gazelles, one of which appeared to have exceptionally fine horns, and, as I was following them up, they were attacked by rival bucks. Being unable in their wounded state to face the attack, they sought refuge in precipitate flight, and were savagely pursued by their assailants, until they disappeared from sight in the distance. In each case the attacking buck apparently intended to kill his antagonist.

I shot the two rhinoceroses which I was permitted to shoot by the conditions of my game licence. The first was shot in company with Judd, on the 24th of February, when we were in camp near the Aberdare Mountains. It was a cow with small horns, but the amount of lead that animal carried before it fell was amazing. The cow was accompanied by a young one nearly full-grown, which had a better horn than its mother, but was not such a large animal. We saw them on one evening through the glasses, at a great distance, cantering along, and evidently making for the wallow in which we eventually found them. By hard walking we managed to come up with them before dark, and approached within 50 yards of them. As the wind was favourable I fired at the cow and hit her exactly in the place at which I aimed, but it was not the right place. It is not difficult to kill a rhino, if you know where to place your bullet, but some experience and some knowledge of the animal's anatomy are necessary to show you where to shoot. On receiving the shot the cow stood

for a moment, and I planted a second bullet in her neck. She then swung round and galloped from left to right across our front. Judd, in the meantime, to prevent possible trouble, had put two solid bullets from a ·577 cordite rifle into the young rhino, which sheered off. As the cow galloped across our front Judd and I put four bullets into her, two from a ·577 and two from a ·450 cordite rifle. One of my shots made her stagger, but she held gallantly on. I proceeded to follow her, but Judd strongly urged me to shoot, so I sat down and commenced shooting at her stern, and at the sixth shot she collapsed and sat down. While we were inspecting the cow the young rhino appeared and circled round for some time, looking for its mother. Apparently the two solid bullets from the ·577 had not caused the animal any serious injury or inconvenience.

Two days after this I had an unsuccessful encounter with a rhino. I was hunting alone, and my gun-bearer saw a rhino standing in a thicket which was surrounded by comparatively open country. I tried to stalk him, but he winded us and bolted back through the thicket. I followed on the outside, and when the rhino emerged from the thicket at a gallop I sat down on the grass and put a solid bullet into his stern. Resenting this treatment, he stopped and turned to face his assailant ; and I thought I was in for a tussle. A bullet from the second barrel, however, made him change his mind, and he sought refuge in flight. There was no blood, and, as I had used solid bullets, and the distance was considerable, the rhino was probably not seriously injured.

Both my friends shot rhinos, after one or two unsuccessful attempts, and Mr. Bird shot two, but their rhinos had not particularly good horns. As is the case with other animals, rhino heads appear to vary much in accordance with the locality, and the heads in this part of the country were poor.

We all made the mistake of firing at rhinos with solid nickel-coated bullets. A soft-nosed bullet from a high velocity rifle will penetrate sufficiently far to reach the vital parts of a rhino's body, and a soft-nosed bullet causes a much more serious wound.

My second rhino was bagged in Laikipia. I was returning from the Pezi swamp to the Laikipia Boma ; and, in the evening, as we were rounding the corner of the swamp, I saw an eland bull and proceeded to stalk him. Johnny was with me, and I had my ·450 cordite rifle, while he was carrying the Rigby-Mauser. Before we had gone far we saw directly in our path four large animals, which I at first thought were hippos, but which on further inspection appeared to be rhinos. I had both heard and read so much about the ferocity of these animals that I confess I was disposed to pass them by and to continue the pursuit of the eland. Johnny's blood, however, was up. His eyes blazed with excitement, and he began aiming with the Rigby-Mauser at the male of the pair nearer to us, which had the finest horn of the four. I could not allow myself to be bluffed, so I approached through the cover afforded by some thorn-trees and got within 50 yards of the big rhino, and

sat down behind one of the trees at the edge of the cover. The rhino was rooting in the ground like a pig, and was standing with his stern inclined towards me, and I decided to try a head shot. Aiming steadily therefore at his throat, between the jaws, I fired. In my ignorance, I thought I was likely to be attacked by one or more of the other rhinos, and resolved to reload the first barrel, immediately after firing, so as to have the two barrels ready for any emergency. The rhino fired at would, I thought, probably stand for a second or two after receiving the shot, and this would give me sufficient time to reload.

The shot, as I afterwards found, struck the point of the jaw near the throat; and the bullet, although it was a solid nickel-coated one, went to pieces in the animal's head, and only fragments of it could be found. Some of the fragments, however, caused mortal injury.

On receiving the shot, the rhino dashed straight at the tree behind which I was sitting, and stood about 15 yards from me, tossing his head about and looking so formidable that I slammed the half-opened breech and tried to fire the second barrel. In my haste I pulled the wrong trigger, and the rhino dashed past the tree to my right, on which side Johnny was standing. He, in the meantime, had fired twice with the Rigby-Mauser; and, as the rhino disappeared, he fired a third shot at its stern. Turning to me with a beaming countenance, he pointed to his heart and said, "I shoot here." As we subsequently found, his first two shots missed the rhino altogether,

though he was practically broadside on at 50 yards, and was head on at 15 yards, and the third shot at the animal's stern was the only one that took effect. Johnny was brave, like most Africans, but had had no experience, and was not at this time of much use as a gun-bearer.

The female rhino, which was with the male I fired at, bolted precipitately at the first shot. The other pair, which were feeding a little farther away from me, trotted back into the swamp, after the wounded rhino had disappeared, travelling together, shoulder to shoulder, like a pair of carriage-horses.

By this time it was too late in the evening to follow the rhino, but on the following morning we went out and tried to track him. There was no blood, and the Kikuyu were homesick and worked very half-heartedly, and I was compelled to abandon the pursuit. I hunted the country, however, on the following day, and by great good luck we found the animal dead. He had travelled a considerable distance from the place where he had been shot. This rhino had a good head, the anterior horn being $24\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $19\frac{1}{4}$ inches in circumference round the base.

My one day's elephant-hunting ended in a failure, but provided a good deal of excitement.

We drew lots for the first shot at an elephant, and the lot fell to me; and, when news of elephants was brought in, I went after them with Judd.

The elephants were in bamboo jungle at some distance from our camp, and we had a long walk

before we reached the place. The bamboos were hollow and were easily crushed by an elephant, and they accordingly afforded no protection. The wind was favourable, and we got into the midst of the herd; and while we stood, listening to the crashing of the bamboos, a number of elephants in single file walked across our front. They were at least 100 yards from me, and were walking fairly fast, but Judd whispered: "The last one is a bull." I understood this to be a hint to fire, and I accordingly tried a heart shot. There was silence for a moment, and then an elephant trumpeted and the herd stampeded. We followed, and the elephants, leaving the bamboos, entered thick forest, trees hung with creepers making very dense cover. My gun-bearer, the man I had before Johnny, who behaved well on this occasion, saw an elephant standing in the forest and beckoned me. I was on an elephant-path through the forest not far from the animal; but, before I made him out, he saw me and charged. Presumably he was the elephant at which I had fired, but it is impossible to be sure of this. I could hear him coming, but could see nothing, so decided to reserve my fire until his head should appear through the screen of branches and creepers above the path. By this time he would have been within three or four yards of me; but, even for an elephant, rapid travelling through such dense cover was impossible, and a shot in the forehead might have stopped or turned him. Fortunately for me, Judd, who was on my left, caught sight of the elephant, when, as he said,

BAMBOO JUNGLE ON KENIA MOUNTAIN.

the beast was about ten yards from me, and fired at him with the ·577 cordite rifle. The elephant vanished, and Judd was unable to fire again; but, by the turmoil in the forest, it was clear that the shot had knocked the elephant over, and that he was trying to rise. Eventually he recovered his feet and bolted. We followed the track, on which there was plenty of blood. We met a young elephant, and then a cow elephant and a calf, which we avoided; and then, as we were following the track through bamboos, a cow elephant came crashing through the bamboos in our direction. Judd said: "Hullo! what have we got here?" and when the head of the elephant appeared facing us, with both ears extended, he raised his rifle and fired. I did the same; and, as the four shots rang out, the elephant sank down dead in her tracks. One of my bullets struck the animal's forehead above the eye and glanced off. The other bullet and both of Judd's bullets struck the animal between the eyes.

I paced the distance from us at which the dead elephant was lying; and it was 17 yards. It is possible that the elephant merely intended to have a look at us; but she was too near and her attitude was too threatening to permit of our giving her the benefit of the doubt.

Cow-elephants, however, could only be shot in self-defence, and Judd was rather put off by the incident. It was also becoming late, and he accordingly suggested that we should return to camp, and follow the track of the wounded bull in the morning. In the night heavy rain

fell; the blood-stains were washed away, and the track of the wounded bull could not be followed.

Both my friends, after some days of waiting, got chances; and, shooting with Judd, bagged tuskers with ivory above the regulation weight. Both elephants were killed by straight shooting, by head shots; and there were no particularly exciting incidents.

WOOD WITH DEAD ELEPHANT.

CHAPTER VI

A WEEK OF DISASTER

I SPENT the Christmas week of the year 1908 in the Sondhar Forest in the Baihar Tahsil of the Balaghat district in the Central Provinces. Mihtab Khan was with me and a peon named Shama, and I had secured the services of a fairly good shikari. Shama was a native of the Kangra district, and had never seen dangerous game until he entered my employment; but he had the makings of a splendid shikari. He had keen sight and hearing, and also the docility and trust in the Sahib which characterises the Dogra. Some days passed very pleasantly in still-hunting, and two good swamp-deer stags, one of which was a ten-pointer, and also a fair sambur, were bagged. Buffaloes had been tied out as baits, but for some days we neither saw nor heard anything of tigers. On the night of the 30-31st of December, however, there was a kill by a tigress. The place was favourable, the kill having occurred in a strip of jungle between the Banjar River and a forest road, and a beat was easily arranged. My machan was tied on the further edge of a deep dry nullah, running into the river at right angles, and the tigress, to escape from the strip of jungle, had to cross this nullah.

The beaters came on well under the direction of the shikari and the forest guard, an intelligent and very plucky Gond, and the tigress soon showed herself among the clumps of bamboos on the opposite side of the nullah. I was in high hopes of getting a favourable shot at her on the bank, but she hid herself behind one of the bamboo clumps and remained there so long that I was afraid she had given me the slip and broken away across the forest road to my left. When the beaters drew near, however, she emerged and descended rapidly into the dry nullah. She was on my left, and I had to fire in a somewhat awkward position. The bullet struck her on the near foreleg low down, breaking the fetlock, but not crippling her very seriously. She dashed up the bank, but soon slowed down, and by the time I had turned in the machan she was going away at a fast walk. She was about 100 yards from the machan when I fired my second barrel, and the bullet struck her high up on the same foreleg, completely shattering the shoulder and knocking her over. She tried to rise, and rolled over again, but then recovered herself and made off. I was using on this occasion a double-barrelled ·450 cordite rifle by Rigby with soft-nosed bullets. Between the place where she was knocked over behind the machan and the thick jungle there was some open ground, and, when the beaters came up, we tracked her across this, and, while following the track, we picked up a large piece of the shattered shoulder-bone. She successfully reached the thick cover, however, and halted near the edge of it; and, as we approached,

SWAMP DEER HEADS.

she roared loudly. The beaters up to this had been full of confidence, and I had had some difficulty in keeping them behind me; but the roar, as poor Mihtab Khan said, was very full of life ("bara jandar awaz"), and they became more cautious. We halted on the edge of the forest, and after a time she shifted her position and retreated to some thick bushes farther in the forest, and there lay up. Shama, who was with me, said that she was breathing heavily, but I could not hear this. I sent for the ladder, and, putting it against a tree, posted myself on it, and then, having sent the other men away, I made Mihtab Khan get up a tree with a shot-gun and fire into the bushes. This caused her to bolt, but I did not get a shot. By this time it was getting dusk, and an adjournment until the following day was necessary.

By the time we returned to camp the men in charge of the young buffaloes had tied them out in the forest; and, as luck would have it, there was another kill that night. I had sent for some grazier's buffaloes over-night to help in the hunt for the tigress, and in the morning ten or twelve buffaloes with two herdsmen duly appeared at my camp. I was in favour of starting at once to hunt the tigress, but the forest guard and Mihtab Khan strongly urged me to have a beat first for the tiger which had killed over-night, and to follow up the tigress afterwards. The beaters were in attendance and, having been well paid by me in person for the previous day's work, were anxious to beat, so somewhat reluctantly I consented. The beat occupied more

time than was anticipated. The tiger was in the beat, but broke out to one side without offering me a shot.

Valuable time had been wasted, and it was 3 p.m. on the 1st of January when we reached the place where we had last seen the tigress. I have read and heard stories of buffaloes following eagerly the scent along the blood-track of a tiger; but the buffaloes we had, when laid on the track, took no interest in it and quickly began to graze. There was no time to lose, so we picked up the track and followed it. The ground was fairly open, and my intention was to drive the buffaloes in front of us if we should enter thick jungle. The track led to some stunted sal, and, as the cover was thick, I stopped and said, "This is a bad place; send for the buffaloes." The tracker was a Baiga, and was an unusually large and powerful man for an aborigine, and he and I were leading, he being on my left, whilst the rest of the party were in the rear. There was, as we afterwards found, some open ground immediately in front of us, and the tigress, seeing this, had turned to the left and lain down in the thick jungle. The words were hardly out of my mouth when she gave a roar and charged. I swung round to shoot, and the Baiga, hearing the tigress close behind him, made a panic-stricken dash forward, and came against the rifle. He struggled desperately and forced me back against two trees, and in the struggle my rifle went off, and my hat was knocked off and was crushed and damaged. While we were struggling the tigress charged by us at only five or six yards'

distance, making for the men behind. But for this unfortunate misadventure I think I should certainly have killed her, as I was cool and collected, and the tigress was broadside on and was clearly visible as she passed through the bushes. When I succeeded in disengaging myself I picked up my hat and remember that I looked ruefully at its condition, and then made my way into the open ground in front. The forest guard and Shama soon joined me, and they thought that all had escaped; but presently Mihtab Khan emerged from the jungle, saying that he was wounded. He had some blood, but not much, on his breeches, and his eyes were staring, but he did not appear to be badly injured. There was then another roar and a rush in the jungle immediately in front of us, and while my attention was directed to my front Mihtab Khan crawled away to the rear. According to the account which he subsequently gave of the occurrence, when the tigress charged there was a stampede, and he was jostled and fell, and she bit him in the thigh. The others, being active aborigines, got up low trees, but one of them, who was on a small sapling, was seized by the foot and pulled down. The tigress was, however, badly crippled, and he managed to crawl away from her. I saw the place the next day. The tigress had reared up and driven the claws of her uninjured forearm into the trunk high up on the tree, and in this way had been able to pull the man down. I heard a shriek, but it was not until I returned to camp in the evening that I heard that one of the Gonds also had been mauled.

I sent Shama with Mihtab Khan back to the camp, and then with the forest guard I went all round the thick patch of jungle to try and get a shot at the tigress; but the cover was too thick. I then tried to drive the buffaloes into the cover. For a moment, evidently scenting the tigress, they did draw together shoulder to shoulder, but they then dispersed, and it appeared hopeless to expect any assistance from them. My shikari disappeared at an early stage in the proceedings, but another man appeared who said he could use a gun. I therefore gave him the shot-gun, which we had with us, loaded with S.S.G., and he climbed a tree on the edge of the patch of cover and fired, but I do not believe that he saw the tigress.

We could see one man standing in a tree in the middle of the cover, and shouted to him several times, asking for information as to the position of the tigress, but he was too terrified to answer. He explained afterwards that the tigress was immediately beneath the tree, and that he was afraid of attracting her attention. I saw the tree on which he was standing next day. It was a thin tree, less than one foot in diameter, and there were no branches. The man was standing on a projection from the trunk not much larger than the palm of a man's hand. He was about 20 feet from the ground, and was therefore perfectly safe so long as he did not lose his nerve; but his anxiety not to attract the tiger's attention was very natural. It was certainly a most uncomfortable perch, and he was there for quite a long time.

During all this time the tigress kept up a continuous low growling, but I was unable to locate her exact position. I advanced again and again to the proximity of the cover to try and induce her to charge out into the open, but without success. The forest guard, who stuck to me most pluckily, apparently thought I was taking things too easily, as he repeatedly urged me to be watchful; but the tigress had evidently no intention of leaving the cover. Night was coming on, and something had to be done. The old Baiga, who did his best to atone for his misdemeanour by remaining on the scene and giving any assistance he could, urged me to go in and finish off the tigress in the cover. This I was not keen to do, as I was unable to locate her, and was afraid that she might pull me down from behind in the thick cover. There appeared, however, to be no prospect of getting a shot at her in any other way, and I was determined not to withdraw defeated: but, before going in, I decided to make one more attempt to drive in the buffaloes.

We accordingly collected the buffaloes, and brought them to the edge of the thick cover at a point where it was easier for them to enter than it was where we had first tried to drive them in. One of the herdsmen had vanished, but the other behaved splendidly and cheered on the buffaloes, while I stood beside him and covered him. The plucky little Gond guard was also close at hand. The buffaloes entered the cover and found the tigress, and, as they did so, they drew together shoulder to shoulder, forming a solid phalanx, and

advanced. It was an ever-memorable scene. As they advanced upon her the tigress commenced roaring, but she could not break the advancing phalanx, and the buffaloes pushed her before them out of the thick cover into comparatively open ground. The man who was perched in the tree said afterwards that one old cow actually prodded the tigress with her horn; and there was a hole in the skin which might have been made in that way. The herdsman and I were within a few yards of the buffaloes, but the tigress was hidden from us by their bodies, and we could not exactly see what was happening in front.

Suddenly the roaring ceased and the buffaloes turned and bolted madly past us. The herdsman turned to me, oblivious for the moment in his excitement of his personal danger, saying, "My buffaloes are beaten! [Kutch himmat nahin rahi]. They have no spirit left." I looked in vain for the tigress. "Where is the tigress?" I said. Then the man looked about and in a second or two pointed her out, at about 25 yards' distance crouched alongside a fallen tree, with her back towards us. At any greater distance it is doubtful if I could have seen her, as she was flattened to the ground. She was at my mercy, and I raked her with two bullets and finished her off.

The disappearance of the tigress apparently caused the panic among the buffaloes; but they had done their work, and made my task an easy one.

The plucky herdsman and forest guard were well rewarded, and they certainly deserved it. Without their assistance I should very likely

have been mauled, as the tigress was not lying in the thickest part of the cover, where I expected to find her.

I returned to camp in good spirits. The accident to Mihtab Khan was certainly not my fault, and I did not think he was badly injured. My nerves had stood the strain well, and I do not think I have ever held the big rifle steadier than I did when I gave the tigress the *coup de grâce*. On arrival at the camp, however, I heard that one of the Gonds had also been mauled, and Mihtab Khan's condition caused me considerable anxiety. He was in full possession of his faculties and described coherently what had happened; but he appeared to be very weak and dispirited, and in the early part of the night he vomited freely.

When news of the mishap reached the camp Mihndu the syce, and a local Excise officer, who was there at the time, rode off to Baihar to fetch the Hospital Assistant, who was in charge, and he arrived in a cart during the night. He took a hopeful view of the case, and said that both the patients would recover; but I had my misgivings, as Mihtab Khan was very depressed. The relatives of the injured Gond wished to carry him to his home, and I had some difficulty in persuading them to agree to his being sent to the hospital at Balaghat for treatment.

In the morning both the injured men were sent in charge of the Hospital Assistant to Baihar *en route* for Balaghat; and on the following day they went farther along the road. Mihtab Khan's condition, however, became steadily

worse, and towards nightfall on the second day he succumbed. He was not in good health, as an attack of malarial fever which he got after an unsuccessful hunt for bison in the Christmas week of 1907–8 in the Jagar Valley, in the Mysore State, had shaken him considerably, and he apparently died from heart failure owing to the shock.

He had some premonition of his death, and my cook, with whom he was on friendly terms, informed me that he had told him, some time before the accident occurred, that he did not expect to survive the season's tour, and had asked that he might be buried either by the side of the road or the railway.

The only meaning that I can assign to this singular testament is that he hoped that his soul, like John Brown's, would go marching on. Poor Mihtab Khan! He took much pride in our wanderings. On one occasion, when I was marching rapidly through the Kohat Salt district, he said that the Pathans had inquired if the Sahib never made a halt, and that he had replied that we marched every day and never halted! This was an exaggeration, but I certainly did march very rapidly when I was on inspection tours, and halted very seldom. The time saved in this way could be devoted unobjectionably in shikar.

The Muhammadans of Baihar turned out and buried Mihtab Khan's body with fitting ceremony, and he lies, according to his wish, by the side of the road from Baihur to Balaghat with an inscribed tombstone at the head of his grave.

He had his faults, but he served me faithfully for several years, and I was much grieved at his death. He left a mother and a widow for whom I made provision, but both of them are now dead.

The Gond who was injured reached Balaghat safely, and recovered completely after treatment for some time in the Balaghat hospital. A friend of mine in the Forest Department interviewed him a year or two afterwards and said that he appeared surprised at so much notice being taken of his mishap, which at that time, at any rate, appeared to him to be a matter of no particular importance.

CHAPTER VII

FOUR DAYS

SOME of the finest sport in India with the rifle is to be had in tracking and shooting the wild buffalo and the gaur, or bison. To have any chance of success, you must be at the place where you hope to find tracks at the first streak of dawn ; and this involves getting up in the dark, and, unless you have an elephant to ride, a long and uncomfortable walk in the darkness ; but, if Fortune is kind, the sport well repays you for your exertions.

Gaur are still plentiful in Mysore and Travancore, and are to be found in fair numbers in some districts in the Central Provinces and Chota Nagpur, but the heads appear to fall off progressively as you go northwards, the best heads being obtainable in Mysore and Travancore, while the heads in Chota Nagpur are inferior to those obtainable in the Satpura Ranges and other places in the Central Provinces.

Wild buffaloes are numerous in Assam and carry enormous horns, but the cover there is dense and the animals are, as I understand, usually shot from elephants. The element of danger, which gives zest to big-game shooting, and the pleasure of tracking and stalking the

animal, are therefore lacking. Wild buffaloes are also to be found in a limited tract of country in the Central Provinces and in the north of the Madras Presidency, and in this country the animals can be stalked and shot on foot. The buffalo heads obtainable in this country are smaller, but appear to be more symmetrical than the heads obtainable in Assam, and make very handsome trophies.

To anyone who is fond of animal life, the long walks in the jungles of the Central Provinces in pursuit of the buffalo and the bison are most enjoyable. The jungle is not too thick, the animals in it can be seen, and you can walk without discomfort. If you have a good tracker also, his skill is a pleasure to watch. Kana, the Gond tracker of Raipur, has a very green spot in my memory.

The Bindra Nawagarh Zamindari of the Raipur district of the Central Provinces, though game there is not particularly abundant, shares with the adjacent Jaipur Agency tracts of Madras the distinction of being at the present time the only part of India where the tiger, the buffalo, the bison and the bear may be found and shot in the same jungle. The Raipur Zamindaris are steadily hunted, as they are a favourite shooting-ground for keen young officers, who are prepared to devote their two months' leave in the hot weather to shikar; and, if the game were not protected by some excellent regulations, which have been made by the Government, the larger animals, especially the buffaloes, would be in danger of extinction. Under the regulations the

numbers of animals, other than the carnivora, which may be shot annually in the Zamindaris is limited, and a sportsman must obtain a shooting permit, which is available for a fixed number of days only. A permit thus granted authorises the holder to shoot a specified number of animals ; but permission to shoot more than one buffalo or one bison is not given, and the sound rule is also in force that an animal wounded counts as an animal killed. The sportsman must follow and bag his wounded buffalo or bison, or must withdraw from the scene.

Fortunately, also, the Gonds in this part of the country, although they will eat almost anything, will not, for some reason or other, eat the wild buffalo, and have, therefore, no temptation to kill these animals. They are passionately fond of bison meat, but the bison usually live in more difficult ground than the buffalo, and have, therefore, a better chance of escape.

The country is, moreover, malarious and unhealthy, and this affords some measure of protection, as the forest land is not likely to be broken up for cultivation. It is to be hoped, therefore, that this splendid hunting-ground may be preserved to provide sport for many future generations.

I paid my first visit to the Zamindaris while I was still in the Indian Civil Service. A controversy between the Government of Madras and the Governments of Bengal and the Central Province provided an occasion for a visit to the Madras border ; and the direct road from the Central Provinces to the border lay through the

Bindra Nawagarh Zamindari. The Excise officers of Bengal and the Central Provinces complained of the smuggling of Ganja (a narcotic preparation of hemp) from the Vizagapatam district and the Jaipur Agency tracts. The Madras Government, relying upon incorrect reports submitted by the local officers, contended that no Ganja was produced in this area. The case could not be settled by correspondence, but the facts could easily be ascertained by a local inspection made by anyone possessing the requisite expert knowledge. Accordingly in February 1909 I started from Raipur on a march to the Madras border. My friend Captain Tweedie (now Colonel Tweedie, D.S.O.), accompanied me on the expedition. I had my D.B. ·450 cordite rifle and Tweedie had a black powder ·500 Express.

After a long and uninteresting march lasting over a fortnight, during which time not a shot was fired, we arrived at a place in Bindra Nawagarh where a man-eating tigress had carried off a few people and had created a scare. The tigress, however, was not to be heard of when we passed through; and we continued our march. A shikari, whom I had employed, and who had preceded us, reported that there were tigers at a place on the road about two marches distant. This information proved to be correct, and on arrival at this place, the name of which was Taurenga, we found that in a sandy nullah, leading from the high-road near the camping-ground, there were many fresh tracks of a tiger and a tigress. A third tiger, as stated by our servants,

escorted them along the road to the camping-ground as they marched during the night. According to their account the tiger repeatedly appeared on the road in front of them; but a villager, who was showing the way, beat a kerosene oil-tin, and a peon, who was in one of the carts, fired off a gun at intervals, so that they were not actually molested. This tiger was certainly very bold and persistent, as in the morning, when I was making the march on horseback, I met some cartmen coming from the direction of Taurenga, who were afraid to proceed, as the tiger was said to have been seen by the side of the road in broad daylight. As the Gonds said, this tiger, if he had not been shot, would probably have caused serious trouble.

My ambition was to shoot a buffalo, which on several occasions, in the Bustar and Patna States, I had tried unsuccessfully to do. We arranged, therefore, that Tweedie was to have the first shot at a tiger, and that I was to have the first shot at any buffalo we might come across. The shikari was very confident that the tigers in the nullah would kill any animal which might be tied out as a bait, but was disposed to disregard the knight of the road, whom he apparently considered to be a wanderer. We decided, however, to have a try for him also, and tied out two bullocks, one in the nullah, and one on the high-road, about three miles from our tents. In the morning we visited the nullah before sunrise, and found that the bullock had been killed and dragged up the bank into the jungle. The drag turned to the left from the top of the bank; and, as we were

following it, a native behind us saw the tiger slinking away in the jungle to the right. Very little of the bullock had been eaten, and the kill had evidently occurred in the early morning.

We then went to the place where the other bullock had been tied and found that it also had been killed, and that the carcase had been dragged to a considerable distance. Part of it had been eaten, and the remainder was hidden in a bed of high reeds in a dry ravine. The country is sparsely populated, and beaters could not be obtained in sufficient numbers, and there appeared to be no water in the ravine. We decided, therefore, to sit up over the two kills. There was, as we subsequently discovered, a pool of water in the ravine in which the carcase of the bullock was lying; and, if we had known this at the time, we should probably have attempted to beat the ravine with any men we could collect, and might have frightened the tiger away. As I have before said, the margin between success and failure in big-game shooting is often a very narrow one.

To have any hope of a shot in the ravine, the reeds hiding the carcase of the bullock had to be beaten down, and the kill by the side of the sandy nullah appeared to offer much the better chance. It was probable also that the tiger would return early to that kill, as very little of the bullock had been eaten. Tweedie, therefore, left camp to sit over the carcase of that bullock at 3 p.m. in the afternoon, though the weather was by this time quite hot, and there were still four hours of daylight. The tiger had, however,

returned to the kill, and there was a repetition of the incident of the morning, the tiger slinking away as Tweedie and his companions arrived. A machan was constructed, and Tweedie sat over the carcase of the bullock all night; but the tiger, having been twice disturbed at the kill, was scared, and did not return.

I also took up my post in the ravine before dark. There was a leafy tree with branches near the carcase, in which we tied a good machan; but the reeds, which were over six feet high, had to be beaten down all round the carcase, and this would have scared many tigers. I had not, therefore, much hope. I kept Shama the peon with me, and arranged with the shikari that he was to come with some Gonds and fetch me at ten o'clock, by which time the moon would be down, as it was only three or four days old. My experience with the shikari in Nepal ought to have prevented me from sitting in a machan with an Indian again; but I had faith in Shama, who had, like most Indians, splendid eyesight, and I thought that his sight and hearing might be useful.

At sundown the tiger roared in the jungle, and it was clear from the sound that he had lain up for the day at a considerable distance from the kill. A beat, therefore, would certainly have been blank, and might have spoilt everything.

Before it was dark I thought I saw the tiger moving in the forest on the hill above the reed-bed. Darkness came on, and there was complete silence, and we waited in eager expectation. Shama, in his excitement, began to breathe heavily,

but a nudge from me kept him quiet, and he behaved well. With his keen eyesight, he made out the tiger crouching in the reeds at the edge of the small clearing we had made; and there, as Shama said, he lay for a considerable time looking at the carcase of the bullock. I was unable to see him, but Shama very wisely did not attempt to draw my attention to him, and sat perfectly still.

At last, reassured by his inspection, the tiger emerged into the circular clearing we had made in the reeds and stood by the carcase, looking strangely small by the faint light of the moon.

Our tree was, however, near the kill, and I had a luminous sight on my ·450 cordite rifle. Catching the moonlight on this, I lowered the muzzle of the rifle until I covered his shoulder and fired. With the gasping "Wouf" which almost invariably follows a deadly shot, he sprang into the reeds and disappeared, and, after a moan or two, all was still. Shama wanted me to fire again; but this would have been quite useless, so we sat still and waited.

At 10 o'clock the shikari came with some Gonds to fetch me, and, as we had no wraps and the nights were still chilly, I was much tempted to risk the descent. Shama, with the usual recklessness of the Indian when the danger is not present and tangible, urged me to go home, and the sounds we had heard were encouraging, but poor Mihtab Khan's death had only recently occurred and I would not risk it. The tree was in the middle of the reeds, and, if the tiger had charged while I was descending, several casualties

might have been the result. I accordingly sent the men away, and we lay on the machan and kept ourselves as warm as we could until the dawn.

At daylight the men returned and helped me down, and I was very glad to find myself safe upon the ground with my rifle in my hand. The place was a most uncomfortable one for an encounter with a wounded tiger. The men, however, climbed trees on the edge of the reeds to reconnoitre. I indicated the direction from which the moans we had heard appeared to come ; and the shikari, after some difficulty, made out the body of the tiger lying in the reeds about thirty yards from the machan. Sticks and stones thrown at the body produced no response, so I advanced cautiously through the reeds and found that he was quite dead. The body was accordingly dragged out of the reeds and carried to the camp in triumph.

After skinning the tiger we moved camp to a place about ten miles distant, where there was said to be a bull-buffalo. The information was, I think, given to the shikari by a Gond named Dhokuri, a capital fellow, brave and intelligent and a fair tracker, who joined our party spontaneously in the hope of a reward.

On the following day we were out before dawn and picked up the track of the bull in one of the sandy nullahs, which were numerous in the country, and which were of great assistance to the sportsman, as all tracks made in the sand were clearly visible. The tracks led from the nullah on to some rising ground, and I followed

them with the hunters while Tweedie waited in the nullah. The bull had joined the herd, and we had not gone far upon the track when the herd took alarm and moved off. Tweedie joined us, and we followed mechanically without any real hope of coming up with the buffaloes. Despair possessed me. I had made many attempts, and much the same thing had happened on each occasion. Luck, as subsequent events showed, had been against me, but at the time it appeared to me that the fault lay with myself, and that I must abandon the hope of stalking and shooting buffalo and bison, and must leave the pursuit to other and younger men.

Fortune, however, was kind on this occasion. Unknown to me, there was another sandy nullah, which joined the nullah from which we had followed the buffalo, at right angles, about half a mile from the place where we then were, and in this second nullah some men were felling a tree. This acted as a Stop, and blocked the retreat of the buffaloes, and they accordingly slackened their pace. Presently Tweedie spotted some of them moving among the trees in front, and we followed with renewed hope. Headed off by the wood-cutters, the herd swung round and retraced their steps along the slope of the rising ground, upon which we were travelling, between us and the nullah in which we had found the tracks. I saw a moving mass below me on the slope at a distance of about 200 yards; and, seeing the direction in which they were going, I pushed on with Dhokuri as fast as I could along the brow of the hill to cut them off. The manœuvre

succeeded, and the buffaloes emerged from the wooded slope on to the level ground rather more than 100 yards from me, galloping at a fair pace. A cow with big horns first caught my eye, and I half raised my ·450 to fire, but fortunately refrained from doing so. Then, from the middle of the herd, an unmistakable bull appeared and crossed over to the left. Wasting no time over the shot, I aimed and fired at his retreating stern. He flinched, and, swerving sharp to the left, disappeared down the slope.

Dhokuri agreed with me that it was a hit; but, when Tweedie and the others came up, we followed for some distance the tracks of the herd, and, as there was no blood, they thought that I had missed. I was confident that the bull was wounded, and further investigation in the sandy bed of the nullah showed that the bull had, as I surmised, left the herd and crossed the nullah alone. There was some blood on his track, but not much of it, the bullet having, as we afterwards found, broken the hind-leg near the buttock. As the bull was galloping directly away from me, it was a good shot, but I was lucky to cripple him so effectually.

We waited a little in the nullah and then followed the track, and before we had gone far the shikari saw the wounded bull standing in some bushes at a distance of about 200 yards. Before we had made him out he saw us and started off, limping badly. I raised my rifle to fire, but Tweedie, who had not at this time had much experience of big-game shooting with high velocity rifles, thought that a shot at that distance

would be useless and checked me. Dhokuri, however, rose to the occasion. Seeing the direction in which the buffalo was going, and recognising that the necessary sprint was beyond my capacity, he seized Tweedie by the hand and started at a run for another nullah, which the buffalo was bound to cross, and in the centre of which a convenient rock offered a splendid position either for attack or defence. They reached the nullah and posted themselves upon this rock; and after a short wait the buffalo appeared, limping badly, and two more bullets from Tweedie's ·500 black powder Express laid him low.

He had a good symmetrical head, the length round the outside of the horns and across the forehead being 7 feet 10½ inches.

I was very elated, and should have been quite satisfied if I had had no more shooting; but the most wonderful good fortune was still in store for me.

On the following morning we returned to the camp where I had shot the tiger. Our permit in Bindra Nawagarh covered one buffalo and two gaur or bison, but the Deputy Commissioner of the district, when giving us the permit, had expressed himself very doubtful as to the possibility of our getting any bison so early in the year. The rainy season, when the ground is damp and the animal can be noiselessly approached, is the best time for stalking and shooting bison in the Central Provinces.

The hot weather, however, was coming on, and the firing of the grass on the hills had

commenced, and this had driven the bison down from the hills into the damp grass land near the sandy nullahs. The grass in places was dense and high, affording good cover.

In the morning Tweedie and the hunters picked up some fresh bison tracks and followed them. I rode straight to camp, and on the way noticed the track of a good bull bison which had crossed the sandy nullah near the camp. Tweedie's hunt was unsuccessful; and he decided to sit for another night over the carcase of the bullock which had been killed by the tiger. There was not much hope of the tiger returning; but I have seen a good tiger shot over a buffalo which a tigress had killed and deserted two days before, and which the tiger had found and dragged into cover.

In the course of the day Kana, the tracker, arrived, having been sent to our camp by my friend Mr. Lowrie, who was then the Divisional Forest Officer of Raipur. Kana had a henchman with him on this occasion whose name I forget, but he was a good tracker. I had not much hope of getting a bison, but, to induce Kana to make the utmost efforts, I promised him a reward of thirty rupees, which is a large sum for a Gond, if he should succeed in getting me a shot; and at 3 p.m. we started to explore the ground into which the bull, whose tracks I had seen in the morning, had crossed. We walked along high ground for three hours; and at about 6 p.m. descended into the damp ground near the nullah, where the grass was very high, and there we saw bison. The nearest one was about

200 yards from me, and was moving through the grass. "The nearest one is a bull," whispered Shama; and, having full confidence in his eyesight, I took aim and fired. As it afterwards appeared, I made a bad but very lucky shot, hitting the bison, which was broadside on, far back on the near hind-leg and fracturing the bone near the hip. The bison disappeared in the grass on the right of a long line of trees, and I hurried along the left of the trees to see if I could get another shot, opening the rifle to reload as I went. On clearing the trees, I saw the head and shoulders of a fine bison appearing above the grass, which was high enough to cover his body. The distance was about 150 yards, and the animal was nearly broadside on, but was on slightly lower ground. I, of course, thought it was the wounded bison, though even at that moment it struck me that the attitude was not that of a wounded animal. The bison had not, in fact, seen what had happened to his comrades, and was looking about to see from which direction danger threatened. I closed the rifle, took a hurried aim, and pulled the wrong trigger, the right barrel being empty, as I had not had time to insert another cartridge. The miss-fire pulled me together, and, taking a steady aim at the animal's shoulder, I fired the second barrel, and the bison disappeared. We advanced cautiously, Kana displaying a prodigious respect for wounded bison generally; and on arrival at the spot we found him lying on the grass. He was dying, but was still breathing; and, to put him out of his suffering, I fired another bullet

through his heart. I had fired at the bison from a standing position, and the distance was considerable : so that it was a fine shot.

It was then dusk, and I started for the camp, leaving Kana in charge of the bison until we could send him help to bring in the head. The more I thought about the animal's attitude, the less could I reconcile it with the flurried appearance which is almost invariably shown by a wounded animal, and I told Kana to see if there were more than two bullets in the bison. On the other hand, it seemed most unlikely that I should have shot two bison bulls in less than two minutes.

Tweedie returned to the camp on hearing the shots ; and the servants were sent off during the night to a village about nine miles distant on the way to a Reserved Government Forest, which was situated on the Madras border, and in which we had a permit to shoot one more buffalo. In the morning, when we were ready to march, Kana appeared with the head and said that there were only two bullets in the bison. Instead, therefore, of marching, we returned to the place where I had fired the first shot, and found there the blood-track of a wounded bison. We followed the track from daylight until 10 a.m. I then sent for the mare ; rode to the village where the tents, which we had sent on, had been pitched ; had some breakfast, and ordered the tents to be brought back ; and then returned with food for Tweedie. We then followed the track of the wounded bull until nightfall. Tweedie had one glimpse of him in

INDIAN BUFFALO AND GAUR OR BISON HEADS.

the forest, but we did not succeed in getting a shot at him.

In the morning we again took up the trail at daylight and followed it until 9 a.m., when it was temporarily lost. The exertions of the previous day had exhausted me, and the weather in the daytime was becoming decidedly hot. It appeared also that we were in for a long, stern chase, so I returned to the camp for a rest, intending to go out again at 3 p.m. Tweedie, who was young and strong, stuck to it ; and his perseverance was rewarded, as about noon he came up with the bison, which was exhausted and could go no farther, and faced his pursuers to fight it out. If you have good trackers, a buffalo or bison with a broken leg has no chance of escape, and has also ceased to be dangerous, and Tweedie had no difficulty in giving the bull the *coup de grâce*.

We took the head and left the carcase to the Gonds ; and Kana's henchman apparently lived in and upon bison for some days. We saw him once, but he was so odoriferous that he was almost unapproachable.

In four days with four shots, in a country in which game was not particularly abundant, I had killed outright a tiger and a bull-bison, and had so crippled a bull-buffalo and another bull-bison that their eventual destruction was certain. There is still fine sport to be had in India.

The bison first killed had a good head for this part of the country, the spread from horn to horn at the widest part outside being 36¼ inches.

Heads in Mysore and Travancore are, of course, often much larger than this. The other was a young bull ; uncle and nephew, as Kana suggested.

We moved camp the next day to the village on the way to the Reserved Forest, I riding with the Forester and an Excise officer, and Tweedie walking with the syce Mihndu. The road lay through the forest, and towards evening I saw two men and a boy, who were on the road in front of me, look into the forest and then begin to run. I shouted and stopped them, and they said that there was a bear near the road. My rifle was not with me, and I did not wish to frighten the mare, so I did not stop to investigate, and rode on to camp. When Tweedie and the syce arrived at the spot it was nearly dark, and the bear made a rush at them, but halted growling at the edge of the forest, and did not actually come out on to the road. Mihndu whirled his stick round his head and gave a loud yell, which may perhaps have had some influence on the bear. In the evening I chaffed him, and said that he was a great bahadur (hero) and had routed the bear, to which he replied : " Kya kare ? Sahib to ghabraia tha " (What was I to do ? The Sahib was flabbergasted). As Tweedie was a brave man, this was decidedly amusing ; but old Mihndu had a good deal of grit, and did the best thing that could have been done under the circumstances. It is quite possible that the bear's rush may have been checked by his demonstration.

The sloth-bear of India is a surly, ill-conditioned beast ; and even the black bear of the Himalayas

often attacks wood-cutters and others without any provocation.

We reached the Reserved Forest in two or three days, and Tweedie began a hunt for buffalo. On the first day on which he went out I followed after sunrise along the forest line, and a bear crossed the line in front of us. Seeing us, he broke into a gallop, and I could not resist having a shot at him. He was about 70 yards away, and I hit him, but too far back, and did not fire again. The noise made by the ·450 in the stillness of the forest was so great that I was afraid of scaring away all the buffaloes in the vicinity, and of spoiling Tweedie's chance. The bear therefore got away. I was sorry afterwards that I had not fired again, as I might have had a second good shot, and a bag of all five animals in so few days would have been unique. I was, however, very anxious that Tweedie should get a buffalo.

He hunted for four or five days without success in the Reserved Forest, and in the adjacent Jaipur Agency tracts, in which the Raja most courteously invited us to shoot, and the prospect looked black; but the chance came. As he was walking one evening with the trackers along the bed of a sandy nullah Dhokuri spotted the horn of a buffalo projecting above a long rock in the bed of the nullah. On the other side of this rock there was a pool, and in the pool a buffalo bull was having a bath. It was a great opportunity. The bull had not heard their feet on the sand, and was taken completely by surprise. They walked straight up to the rock, and the frightened

buffalo dashed off at great speed and disappeared in the forest. Tweedie fired once with his ·500 black powder Express and hit the buffalo in the flank; but, as it afterwards appeared, too far back.

By this time it was too late to do anything more, but at daylight in the morning we took up the track and followed it for three hours. There was blood, but it was frothy blood, and I thought that the animal was hit in the stomach. So evidently did Dhokuri, as he sidled up to me and recommended me to keep my eye on a tree. "Yih bainsa to chot karega" (This buffalo will charge) he said.

At 9. a.m. I was reluctantly obliged to abandon the hunt, as this was the day for the market in Jaipur at which Ganja was said to be freely sold, and which I had specially come to see. I accordingly gave Tweedie my blessing and my ·450 cordite rifle, which was more useful, and left him.

According to Tweedie's account they came up with the buffalo in the middle of the day, and found him lying in some bushes facing his track. A high wind was blowing from the buffalo to them, which prevented the buffalo from scenting or hearing them, and they had sufficient time for a council of war. One ear of the buffalo was showing; and, on Kana's advice, Tweedie fired at the animal through the ear. Tweedie and Kana were behind one tree, and Dhokuri and the coolie with the tiffin-basket were behind two other trees. At the last moment the tiffin coolie changed his position; and the buffalo, charging

instantly at the shot, with amazing velocity for so heavy an animal, caught sight of the coolie and went for him. The buffalo, as Tweedie said, passed within a few inches of Dhokuri's tree, but Dhokuri had the intelligence and the nerve not to move, and his presence was not discovered. Tweedie fired the second barrel of the ·450 into the buffalo as he charged; but this did not distract his attention, and he dashed straight at the tree behind which the tiffin coolie had taken shelter, and up which he was trying to climb. The gallant but stupid beast crashed into the tree; and then, instead of hunting the man round the tree, drew back a little and crashed into the tree again, trying to knock it down. By this time Tweedie had reloaded, and two more bullets from the ·450 laid him low. The coolie's arms were bruised, but he was not seriously injured.

The head was a better one than mine, being slightly over 8 feet, and the horns were very symmetrical and well marked.

A visit to the market established the fact that Ganja was freely sold there. I also, in the course of another tour, ascertained that Ganja was produced to a considerable extent in the country inhabited by the Khonds in the Eastern Ghâts in the Vizagapatam district, and that these primitive savages understood the necessity for the extermination of the male plants.

Special tours for the investigation of facts are not encouraged in India, and I think this is a mistake. A hard-worked district officer, when asked to report upon a subject to which his

attention has not been directed, and of which he has no special knowledge, is not unlikely to submit an incorrect report. In the course of my tours as Inspector-General I found out some things of importance regarding Excise and Opium which were unknown to the local officers.

The object of my journey to the Madras border having been accomplished, and the two buffaloes and the two bison, covered by our permits, having been shot, we returned to Raipur. On the way back Tweedie shot a she-bear in a beat, which had a small cub, and he carried away the cub as a pet. I did not fire another shot. A successful big game expedition in India does not necessarily involve much shooting. In Africa, where you have to shoot daily for food, there is a much greater expenditure of cartridges.

I retired from the Indian Civil Service in the spring following this expedition; and Mihndu, the syce, went back to his home in Oudh.

CHAPTER VIII

BORNEO

At the request of the Directors of the Chartered Company, I visited British North Borneo in the spring of 1911, after my retirement from the Indian Civil Service, to report upon the administration. From England I went to India, arriving there in November 1910; and from India, in February 1911, I went on to Borneo, landing at the port of Jesselton on the west coast on the 8th of March.

In India I took part in a big bear drive in the Poonch State, in the course of which, I think, I killed one bear outright and helped to kill another, and then went on to Dachigam in Kashmir to shoot hangul (barasingh). On the day I arrived at Dachigam I shot two large male black bears while still-hunting; but on the following morning I had an attack of malarial fever, which compelled me to give up shooting and return to Srinagar. After some days I was able to travel, and made my way to Lahore and then to the Central Provinces, but it was the most severe attack of this fever I have ever had, and I was on the sick list throughout the greater part of December. In January I shot a good sambur stag in the Tapti Valley, but this stag

and the two Dachigam bears were the only important additions which I made to my collection of Indian trophies during this season.

I spent a very interesting and strenuous two months in Borneo. His Excellency the Governor and the other officials employed in the country received me most kindly, and my tours and inquiries were facilitated in every possible manner. The rubber and tobacco planters also showed me much kindness and hospitality. I visited all the important places on the coast of British North Borneo; marched to Rundum on the Dutch border in the interior of the country; and in a second expedition marched from Tenom in the south through the interior to the slopes of the Kina Balu Mountain; and then down to the coast at Tempassuk and along the coast to Kudat in the extreme north. We had no tents, but the natives rapidly construct shelter-huts with bamboos and leaves, which are clean and look very comfortable, and are also fairly water-tight.

On the rare occasions when Kina Balu is not hidden by clouds in the evening, a sunset in the west of British North Borneo is something to be remembered. The mountain is over 13,000 feet high, and is crowned by fine jagged peaks; and, when the sun goes down behind the wooded islands on the coast and Kina Balu is lit up in the background by the golden light, the scene is marvellously beautiful.

There is a good deal of animal life in North Borneo. There are elephants on the east coast and in the adjacent part of the country, which

are said to be descended from a pair of these animals which were presented by the East India Company to the Sultan of Sulu. Timbadau (wild cattle) resembling the *hsine* in Burma, but having dark glossy skins, are in some places fairly numerous, and Malay bears and honey-bears, sambur, mouse-deer, and a curious-looking wild pig resembling the babiroussa, are abundant. A small kind of rhinoceros and a small but beautifully marked leopard, known as the Borneo tiger, are also to be found. The leopard is, however, very rare, and the rhinoceros is hunted so eagerly by native hunters for the sake of the horn, which fetches a high price in China, that there is a danger of the animals being exterminated. Orang-outang, or mias, though rare, are also to be found in parts of North Borneo; and the theory that there are two species is still held. I saw one skull which must have formed part of a very formidable animal.

Alligators are numerous and attain an enormous size. They are frequently man-eaters, and are naturally much dreaded. I was, however, informed that when an alligator has made itself too great a nuisance, the natives organise a hunt; and, when the alligator has been hunted and driven until he is panic-stricken, an expert swimmer dives into the water, gets below the alligator, and stabs it in the soft part of the belly. The fixed fee for this exploit was said to be five dollars. I had no opportunity of witnessing the performance of this feat, but officers serving in the country informed me that the thing was done. The alligator or crocodile

is a cowardly brute; and it seems possible that an animal, when thoroughly scared, may become temporarily incapable either of assuming the offensive or of defending itself successfully against attack.

On my journey through the interior of the country, the only matter in regard to which the natives approached us with representations was an order which had been recently issued by the Government prohibiting the use of bingkassan (spring-traps) for deer and pig. The order was evidently considered to be an unnecessary interference with the liberty of the subject; and my fondness for shikar disposed me at first to listen favourably to the representations. When I inquired into the matter, however, I found that the order was really necessary, as the traps are exceedingly dangerous. A sharpened bamboo spear is held in position by a strong bamboo spring at the side of any path or track which an animal has been seen to use; and contact with a string stretched across the path or track releases the spring and the spear is discharged. If the trap is set for a sambur, the spear passes through the thigh of a man who may happen to release the spring, and, if it is set for a pig, the spear passes through the leg lower down. The use of such traps on any path or track which is likely to be traversed by human beings other than the person who has set the trap is, therefore, very objectionable.

The blow-pipe, with small poisoned darts made from the rib of a palm-leaf, is still the weapon of the jungle-dwelling Muruts, or Sun-Dyaks.

A straight piece of wood forming the pipe is ingeniously hollowed out, and the pipe, with a piece of sharpened iron attached to the end, does duty as a spear, while the darts are carried in a small quiver on the shoulder. To ascertain at what distance the blow-pipe is effective, I organised, when I was at Rundum, a blow-pipe competition for a prize in money. The Muruts made very good shooting at a target, with a four-inch bull's-eye, at a distance of 25 yards, but at 50 yards only one shot hit the target.

The Muruts, who are little men, are able to hide themselves and move very noiselessly in the forest, and by stealthy stalking they can get within range of the man or animal they are attacking. A monkey is, I understand, a favourite article of diet.

I had only two days' shooting in Borneo, but had the luck to shoot a timbadau bull. The animals are largely nocturnal and keep in thick jungle during the day, and by ordinary still-hunting a shot at one is not easily obtained. My son, who was then in the 21st Indian Cavalry in India, took leave and joined me in Borneo, and was with me when I made the march through the interior of the country from Tenom to Kudat. On the way from Tempassuk to Kudat we passed through country where timbadau were fairly numerous, and at one place a local Bajao (Malay) hunter reported that three bulls had been seen on more than one occasion outside the forest. A hunt was accordingly organised. It was arranged that my son and I should start early to try and get a shot at the bulls while they were still in the

open; and that Mr. Fraser, who was on special duty with me throughout my stay in the country, and Mr. Bunbury, the district officer, should follow later with beaters and beat the jungle. My son and I left camp before dawn mounted on ponies, and rode about four miles to the place which the bulls were said to frequent. The hunter, who accompanied us, rode a buffalo which, much to my surprise, shambled along and kept up with the horses. The sun was nearly up when we reached the place, but we were just in time, and my son saw the three black bulls in the open making their way slowly back to the jungle. We made a detour and cut them off, and I had a shot at the leading bull as he stopped for a moment within a few yards of the jungle. The distance was considerable, and the bull was not quite broadside on, and the bullet struck him too far back. I was using at the time a Rigby Mauser magazine rifle with a ·350 bore, a very powerful rifle which I had purchased when I had made my second expedition to East Africa. The bull, when wounded, dashed into the jungle, and the other two bulls made off in another direction. My son and I had shots at them as they went, and either of us, shooting alone, would probably have bagged one, as, although they were between 200 and 300 yards from us, they were out in the open and were not moving very fast. Rapid competitive firing does not, however, conduce to good shooting, and the bulls escaped.

I then armed myself with my D.B. ·450 rifle, and we proceeded to track the wounded bull;

but the hunter, who was with us, continually lost the track. It did not occur to me that the man was afraid, and I merely thought that he was incompetent. We accordingly gave up the pursuit, and went back to meet the other sportsmen, with the object of obtaining the services of a better tracker. We had not gone far when we met the hunt arriving. The Bajao beaters, thirty or forty in number, with their large palm-leaf hats and bare legs, were all mounted on country-bred ponies, and presented a weird and amusing spectacle. A native Muhammadan gentleman from Dutch Borneo, who had settled in the Company's territory, was one of the party. He had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and was an intelligent, courteous gentleman, and was said to render considerable assistance to the administration. He did not look like a sportsman, but he had a gun and was very keen, and showed himself in the course of the day to be quite a good shot.

Mr. Bunbury supplied us with another hunter, who had some mongrel dogs, and we returned to the place where the wounded bull had entered the forest. There was a herd of timbadau in the forest, and as soon as the dogs were let loose they dashed into the cover in full cry, and the timbadau began bolting out into the open at the end of the jungle, which was not far distant. Mr. Bunbury and Mr. Fraser ran to cut them off, and some free shooting began. My son also, after a few minutes, followed the others. I was much disgusted, as there appeared to be little or no hope of my recovering the wounded bull,

but I remained on the spot with a Pathan orderly, who was on duty with me, and told my son to ask Mr. Bunbury to send back the hunter who was with us in the morning. In a short time the hunter appeared, and, while I was standing outside the forest with the two men, there was a yap from one of the dogs, and then a tremendous snort, which evidently came, as we all recognised, from the wounded bull. I proceeded to enter the jungle, but the orderly, Suleiman, showed the white feather and would not accompany me.

"Don't go, Sahib," he said; "he will kill you." He was a Pathan from the Hazara district of the North-West Frontier provinces, who had gone to Borneo as a lad, and was employed in the Indian Police in the service of the Chartered Company. He was an intelligent man, and was very useful to me as an interpreter; but he showed a great want of spirit on this occasion. The Malay hunter accompanied me for a short distance, but, crouching down, he either saw, or thought he saw, the bull and retreated, leaving me alone. A second snort from the jungle, however, gave me the direction; and, as I advanced, I saw the bull coming slowly towards me through the trees and bushes. He came straight for me, and may have intended to charge when he was near enough. On the other hand, it is quite possible that he did not see me. He gave me a good chance, and a shot from the ·450 rifle laid him low.

A female timbadau also was shot, but I do not think that any other bulls were seen.

I then went on to the next camp, and the others

continued to beat the jungle until the evening. A sambur was shot by the Haji, but the remainder of the day does not appear to have been particularly eventful.

The headskin of the timbadau unfortunately was spoiled, and the head is the only one of all my trophies which is mounted without the mask. It rains almost every day in Borneo, and we were marching rapidly, so I was unable to look after the skin properly.

In the vicinity of Kudat I visited a Dutch planter, who had shot a large number of these animals. His plan of operations was very simple and effective. He employed Malay trackers, and kept a pair of English bull-terriers. When fresh tracks of a bull were seen in, or near, the plantation, he followed them with the trackers, until the scent was hot, and then let go the dogs. The bull, on being overtaken by the dogs, would stand at bay, and the sportsman was able to get in a good shot.

In dense tropical jungles, like those in Borneo, I think this method of shooting was justifiable; and it was certainly very effective, as my host had a large number of heads.

I went out with the planter on one morning, but there were no fresh tracks, and the hunt was unsuccessful.

My son in another part of the country stayed at a Malay village, and hunted for some days, but did not succeed in bagging a timbadau.

Two incidents in the course of my tour in Borneo impressed me much. While I was inspecting the railway Mr. Fraser and I crossed in the

train a bridge over a small stream. The bridge had no parapet, and Mr. Fraser told me that on one occasion he had, while travelling by train, arrived at this bridge when the stream was in high flood. The bridge was completely covered, and he asked the Malay engine-driver rather anxiously whether the bridge was still there. "God knows," said the Malay, and started the train. I think this was the most amusing instance of Oriental fatalism I have ever heard of.

At Tenom, in the Resident's house, I saw the "exhibit" of an important criminal case, which had recently occurred. The Muruts in British North Borneo, when I visited the country, were still addicted to head-hunting, although under the Company's rule the practice was being steadily suppressed. Six Javanese coolies ran away from a plantation in the vicinity of Tenom and took refuge in a Murut village. The chief of the village had, on previous occasions, taken runaway coolies back to the plantation, and had received rewards of three dollars per head for doing so. On this occasion, however, a tempter in the village had said to him, "What is the use of eighteen dollars? Let us take their heads." The chief yielded to the temptation; and the unfortunate Javanese were led into an ambuscade on the following morning and murdered. The murder was kept quiet for several months, but rumours of foul play began to circulate, and Mr. Francis, the Resident, sent for the chief and questioned him. His answers were unsatisfactory, and further inquiries were instituted, as a result of which the chief was placed on his

trial for murder, and was found guilty and hanged.

The chief's gruesome trophies, eight human heads (as well as I remember), were still in the Resident's possession. They were all in a wicker cradle, and in the nostrils of some of the heads boar's-tusks had been inserted, curving upwards, as an additional ornamentation.

As practised by the Muruts, head-hunting is a most despicable business, the head of a woman or child being apparently prized almost as much as the head of an enemy killed in open fight.

It was said, presumably with truth, that I was the oldest white man who had ever been in the interior of British North Borneo. My report, which dealt with all branches of the administration, met with warm commendation from the Directors of the Company, and was also highly approved by His Excellency the Governor and other officers serving in the country. This naturally was very gratifying to me.

Many reforms have been introduced since the time of my visit, but in 1911 the government of this large country by a handful of resolute young Britons, supported by less than 400 armed Indian policemen and by a few Dyaks and other native police, was a striking illustration of the genius for administration which is possessed by the British race. The Dusans, who constitute the largest element in the population, are for the most part peaceful and inoffensive; but the Sulus (Moros) and Bajaos, especially the former, are blood-thirsty and revengeful, and the Muruts are still in a state of savagery.

On the occasion of a virulent outbreak of small-pox a very large number of vaccinations were performed, with much benefit to the natives in the interior of the country, by the young district officers with the assistance of Indian policemen, as no medical aid was obtainable.

There was some discontent also in the service at this time, but the officers employed did their duty in spite of this. There were, of course, many things in the administration which required alteration and revision; but, in my opinion, the government of the country, as then conducted, was a marvellous British achievement.

CHAPTER IX

A SHOOT IN INDIA IN 1911–12

In the cold weather of 1911–12 I visited India for the second time after my retirement from the Indian Civil Service, and had a very pleasant shoot in the Central Provinces and in Kashmir. I arrived in India shortly before Christmas, and marched for some days with my friend Mr. Hart, the Inspector-General of Forests, and the Honourable J. W. Best, the Deputy Conservator, while Mr. Hart was on tour in the Bilaspur district of the Central Provinces. We had some shooting in the course of the tour. I shot a rather small tigress in a beat, and Best shot a tiger in another beat, killing him when he was at a gallop, with a fine shot. Best also wounded and lost a bear, and successfully stalked and shot a good swamp-deer stag. I killed one of two bears which came out in a beat, and missed the other, as he galloped away, with the second barrel. I also shot a second bear, when I was sitting up over a goat, which had been tied out as a bait for a panther. The goat, which was a white one, was tied on a path in the forest. The panther did not come, but, when it was dark and I had nearly given up hope of a shot, a bear strolled along the path. His surprise and alarm when

he found himself confronted with the goat were amusing. After making a demonstration, he retreated into the bushes before I had time to fire, but in a short time he emerged on the other side of the machan, leaving the goat in undisturbed possession of the path, and I killed him with a single shot.

I then left Mr. Hart's camp, and made my way to the south-east corner of the Central Provinces, where I had had such fine sport in 1909. By the kindness of the Deputy Commissioner of the Raipur district, and of Mr. Lowrie, the Deputy Conservator of Forests, I had obtained permits to shoot two buffaloes, one in the Bindra Nawagarh Zamindari and one in the Reserved Forest on the Madras border, and I began work in the Reserved Forest. My battery on this occasion consisted of my D.B. ·450 cordite rifle, which I had obtained special permission from the Government of India to reimport into the country, rifles of this bore being barred in India, and a ·350 Rigby-Mauser magazine-rifle, which I had purchased for my second expedition to East Africa. Kana and a friend of his, by name Deo Singh, joined me, and we proceeded to look for tracks. We soon picked up the track of a good bull, and followed it unsuccessfully for two days, losing it eventually upon hard ground quite near my own camp.

When shooting alone in the Central Provinces I used a small field-officer's Kabul tent, and took with me very few servants, so that the game was not scared by the presence of strangers in the

jungle or by the wood-cutting which a large camp in the cold weather necessitates.

While we were searching for the lost track of the buffalo we came across two bears, a female and a cub about three-quarters grown. I shot the mother with the ·350 through the heart. She ran off, making a great noise, and, after going for some distance, fell dead. The cub, which was slightly in front of his mother, seeing her fall, turned back, caught hold of the body with his forearms, and tried to lift her up. This display of natural affection rather put me off, and I fired at the cub rather carelessly with the ·450, wounding him, but not badly. He gave a screech and started to run directly past me into the thick forest. As I threw up my rifle to fire the second barrel, it went off in some unexplained manner, leaving me helpless with the bear within 20 yards of me. He turned his head and snarled at me, but fortunately for me he did not attack, and ran on to the forest. We followed the blood track for some distance, but could not come up with him.

After this incident we again turned our attention to the buffaloes. Kana had heard of another bull on the opposite side of the camp, and on the following morning we began a hunt for him. We visited some likely clearings before dawn, and in one of these we found the buffalo grazing. The wind was right, and it was a complete surprise, and I very unwisely tried to kill him with a shot in the forehead from the ·350. The shot was a difficult one, as the animal was facing me, and his head was moving as he grazed, and I

made a miss, the bullet searing his forehead between the horns. The startled buffalo dashed to the right, and stood looking for his assailant. Deo Singh bolted for a tree with the big rifle. I ran after him, seized the rifle, and fired rather hurriedly, hitting the buffalo on the right foreleg near the shoulder. He turned and faced me, and my second shot grazed the same foreleg, and lodged in the hind-leg, knocking him over, but not breaking the bone. He soon scrambled to his feet and bolted. We followed the track with difficulty, as the ground was very hard and there was very little blood. I had an interval for breakfast, but the men were on the track all day. It was, however, uphill work, and in the evening Kana decided to visit some water in the vicinity in which he thought the bull might be lying. He was there, sure enough, his nose and horns and part of the dorsal ridge being visible above the water. I stalked him, and secured a good position near the edge of the water, and ought then to have frightened the buffalo and fired at him as he rose. Very stupidly, however, I tried to break his back by aiming just below the exposed portion of the dorsal ridge. As I fired the buffalo rose with some difficulty, but disappeared into the forest with unexpected celerity as soon as he left the water. I did not fire the second barrel, partly because I was in the open and in close proximity to the buffalo and did not like to leave myself entirely unprotected, and partly because I thought that the first shot must have inflicted a mortal wound. Subsequent examination, however, showed that

the few inches of water had deflected the bullet, which merely tore off a large piece of the hide, about six inches square, and caused the animal no injury. It appears to be useless to fire at any animal through even a few inches of water ; and some of my readers may profit by the experience.

By this time it was nearly dark, and the buffalo took refuge in a thick part of the forest about one mile from my camp. We tracked him during the whole of the next day through the forest, but failed to come up with him, though we found one place where he had lain down facing his track and waiting for his pursuers.

On the third morning Kana was confident that the buffalo must have left the cover to drink during the night, so, making a wide circle, we visited before dawn all the pools of water in the vicinity, and eventually we picked up the track. The ground was soft and the track was easy to follow, and Kana soon whispered that we were near him, and, after going a few yards farther, we found him grazing. I was absolutely amazed, as I thought he was grievously wounded. His shoulder was hidden from me by a tree, but I thought I could hit him far enough forward to stop him, and fired. Off he went, and we again followed in pursuit, coming up with him once, but having no chance of a shot. I then made for my camp to get some breakfast, and, as we emerged from the forest, the buffalo, which had apparently come to the conclusion that this part of the forest was no longer a desirable residence, appeared in the open, parallel to us, and at about 200 yards' distance. He was making

his way rather slowly and painfully along, and I brought him down with the ·350.

He had not a particularly good head, the circumference measurement being only 7 feet 2½ inches, and the horns, though massive, were circular rather than elliptic. I had also made two bad mistakes of judgment and some bad shooting, and the only satisfaction I could get out of the business was that I had stuck to him persistently in thick jungle at considerable personal risk, and had eventually finished him off.

We then moved camp to the village in the Zamindari, where Tweedie and Mihndu, the syce, had had the adventure with the bear in 1909, and where Deo Singh reported that there was a big bull-buffalo. This bull was disposed to be savage, and had chased two or three people. On arrival at the village a local shikari showed us tracks of the buffalo; but Kana considered that none of the tracks were absolutely fresh, and he was therefore in favour of trying the ground where we had met with so much success in 1909. We accordingly started on the following morning for Taurenga. The bull, however, was in the forest near the village; and, as we were on the march before dawn, we came upon him in a large clearing in the forest through which we had to pass. He was a huge beast, and looked magnificent in the grey of the dawn; and the syce, who had taken Mihndu's place, and who had not before seen a wild buffalo, was lost in amazement at his size. Deo Singh was with me with the ·350, but Kana was behind with the big rifle. The bull was about 200 yards from me, and, as I was in the open

without any cover, I was not prepared to take the risk of firing at him with the ·350 from a standing position. I sat down, but the grass in the clearing obscured my view of the animal. I accordingly tried to reach some trees, which were about 80 yards from the buffalo on his right flank, intending to fire from there. The buffalo, however, would not allow me to approach so near, and cantered off into the jungle.

We continued the march to Taurenga and hunted for a day there, but found only tracks of cows; so we decided to return and hunt the big bull. Dhokuri, whom I had not sent for, turned up while we were at Taurenga. I was very glad to see him, and his flattery in the best Hindustani he could muster, "Tum bara pakka goli dete ho" (You shoot very straight), was evidently sincere.

On the way back through the clearing, where we had seen the buffalo, I fortunately decided to examine the ground, and found that if, instead of advancing, I had retreated for forty or fifty yards, there was a large stone, with some trees in close proximity to it, upon which I might have seated myself and fired with comparative safety. On the next morning, in company with the local shikari, we visited the clearing before dawn; but the bull was not there. We then visited some other likely places without success; and, while we were thus engaged, the local shikari left us, and, hunting on his own account, found the track of the bull in some thick forest. We followed the track in the afternoon, and after some time came upon the bull standing in the

forest. The distance was not more than 100 yards, and I could see part of one horn and a bit of the animal's face, but the body was hidden by the trunks of the trees. Much to the disgust, therefore, of the local shikari, I would not fire.

The buffalo moved off, but he was not much alarmed, and soon slackened his pace; and, as the track was leading in the direction of the clearing in which we had first seen him, we decided to visit the clearing at dawn and returned to camp.

In the morning at dawn we visited the clearing and there he was, quite near to the place in which we had first seen him. By Kana's advice, I made for the stone to which I have referred, and while I was approaching it the buffalo saw me. Thinking I was alone, as the two Gonds kept themselves better concealed, he trotted forward in my direction, apparently with the intention of turning me out of the clearing, and stood facing me at a distance of about 150 yards, snorting and looking very magnificent. "Huzur ko dekhne ko aya" (He has come to have a look at you), whispered Deo Singh with a grin. I seated myself on the stone, and, as I had the ·350 in my hand and the ·450 at my side, I felt pretty confident. Taking steady aim with the telescopic sight, I fired straight at his chest. He turned at the shot and galloped off: but his movements were very flurried, and, after going for a short distance, he fell stone dead.

We found him lying at the edge of the forest, and, at Kana's desire, I put another bullet into him from the ·450; but he did not move. When

[82] INDIAN BUFFALO HEAD

I opened the rifle it jammed, and an examination made subsequently at Calcutta showed that the mainspring of the left barrel was broken. Whether it was broken by my firing at the bear without putting the gun to my shoulder, or whether the premature discharge of the rifle on that occasion was due to the failure of the spring, must remain for ever a mystery.

The incident showed that it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk of accident in big-game shooting. If I had known also that the big rifle, upon which I relied for protection in the event of a charge, was out of order, I should not have felt so confident, and might not have put in so deadly a shot.

The buffalo had a fine head, with very well-shaped horns. The length round the horns and across the forehead is 8 feet 8½ inches, and the head is one of the most prized of my trophies.

I had the satisfaction of having done the right thing in the hunt for this buffalo. On two occasions I had refrained from firing when a shot was not likely to have been successful, and might, on the first occasion, have been disastrous; and the trouble I took to reconnoitre the clearing in which we had first seen the buffalo, was well repaid. Dhokuri's admiration for my shooting was still further increased, and to that simple savage I shall always be a bit of a hero. An Indian judges by results, and the fortune which had favoured me so markedly both in 1909 and 1911 would not, in his eyes, detract from the merit of the performance.

I heard a tiger on one occasion, in broad daylight,

but saw nothing either of tiger or bison in this expedition. The firing of the grass had not commenced, and the bison were all in the hills.

I have walked for days in company with Indian shikaris and trackers in jungles in which tigers and panthers were numerous, and have hunted before dawn and until dusk, but I have never had the good fortune to meet a tiger or a panther casually. With Kana I always hunted until we could see no more, and he would find his way back to the camp in the dark, through a trackless forest, with the unerring instinct of an animal.

After shooting the buffaloes I went from the Central Provinces to Kashmir, and at the end of February I had a very successful shoot for hangul (barasingh) in the Dachingam Reserve. In three successive days, with the aid of Sultana, a Kashmir shikari, I stalked and shot two good stags and a serow. Both the stags had fine heads, with horns 42 inches long. One of them was a twelve-pointer with a very symmetrical head, but one tine was broken. This has, however, been well repaired by the taxidermists, Edward Gerrard and Sons. The other was a ten-pointer, but the horns were very massive, being $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches round the beam above the brow-tine. The spread also was very fine, the width from tip to tip outside being $42\frac{3}{8}$ inches.

I was very anxious to shoot a red bear, and made a second expedition to Dachigam in the month of March for the purpose; but without success. It was early in the season, and red bears are

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not numerous in Kashmir. It was too early also for the black bears, which were still hibernating, and only one was seen by my men on the last day we spent in the forest. It went back into the hole from which it had emerged, and I was unable to get a shot at it.

Both in the Central Provinces and in Kashmir, however, I had a good sport in this season.

CHAPTER X

MOSTLY ABOUT BEARS

I SHOT my first bear in Kashmir. As Commissioner of Northern India Salt Revenue, I marched in the autumn of 1904 from Simla through the Native State of Suket to Mandi, to inspect the State salt-mines ; and from the mines I travelled down the Bias River to Pathankot. From there I went to Madhopur, crossed the Ravi, and marched along the foot-hills to Jammu ; and then, crossing the Chenab, I entered Kashmir by the Banihal Pass, and marched down the valley to Baramula, and from there I went by tonga to Rawalpindi. Lord Ampthill, who was acting as Viceroy at the time, was in Kashmir, and no conveyance was obtainable for the journey from Baramula to Rawalpindi. But, to avoid any unnecessary waste of time, I took the place of the babu who was in charge of the Viceroy's mail, and drove in a tonga without stopping, from Baramula to Rawalpindi, a journey of 36 hours. I completed this expedition, in the course of which I crossed all the five rivers of the Punjab, by steady, hard marching in two months, and acquired much useful information during the tour.

When some of my friends at Simla heard that

I was visiting Kashmir in connection with salt, they thought that I was perpetrating an ingenious official swindle; but in no other place in India was the supply and taxation of salt so burning a question as it was, and perhaps still is, in Kashmir. The Governor of Kashmir, Pandit Man Mohan Nath, who had begun his official career under me when I was Settlement Officer of Gurdaspur, informed me that he had seen poor Kashmiris sitting round a lump of Punjab rock-salt, and eating their *sāg* (vegetables) in its proximity, but without actually tasting it, as it was too costly to be consumed. It was, in fact, a case of "potatoes and point." An attempt to induce the Kashmir Darbar to adopt the sensible arrangement in force in most of the Native States in India under which the ruler, in consideration of a fixed annual payment by the British Government, forgoes the right to impose any additional duty upon British duty-paid salt entering his territory, was unfortunately unsuccessful, and the primary object of the tour was therefore not attained; but the information acquired was very useful to me.

The salt used in Kashmir is brought from the mines in the Salt Ranges in the Punjab, and this salt at that time was liable to a British duty of two rupees eight annas a maund of $82\frac{2}{7}$ lbs. In addition to this, a duty of one rupee five annas six pies per maund was imposed on the salt, when imported into Kashmir, by the Darbar; and, as the cost of transportation of salt in Kashmir is very high, the price of salt in the more inaccessible places was prohibitive. Salt of good

quality can be gathered free of duty at the lakes in Tibet on the border of Ladakh, and no duty was imposed by the Darbar on this salt when imported into Kashmir. The cost of its transportation on pack-animals by hill-roads was, however, so great that the highly taxed Punjab salt could apparently be sold in Kashmir at a lower price.

Along the low hills in Jammu Punjab rock-salt was on sale at 16 lbs. for the rupee, and in the British villages in the Gurdaspur district, a few miles away, the price was 30 lbs. for the rupee. The people, although I was the Salt Commissioner, made no complaint to me about the high price of salt, although they complained bitterly about an increase which had recently been made in their land revenue assessment.

I commend this fact to the consideration of the doctrinaire politicians who talk glibly about being no party to the taxation of a necessity of life. A salt-tax in an Oriental country, in so far as it represents the appropriation by the Government of the excess profit of the producer, the transporter, and the vendor, is a very good tax. An indirect tax is always more popular in the East than a direct tax, and by good and intelligent administration a large revenue can be obtained from salt without any increase, and even in places with a positive decrease, of the price of it to the people. The officers in charge of the salt administration should devote their attention to questions of production, transportation, and distribution; as the preventive work of the Department is of comparatively little

importance. Salt is a bulky article, and illicit salt, transported across country by carts, pack-animals or porters, cannot compete with licit salt, transported by water or railway, except in the immediate vicinity of the place of production. Organised smuggling from the recognised salt-works must of course be prevented, but this is not a difficult matter. If licit salt is good, and is reasonably cheap, none but the poorest of the population will use inferior illicit salt; and, if some poor people do use inferior illicit salt, made or spontaneously produced in the vicinity of their houses, the revenue of the Government will not appreciably suffer. Vigorous preventive measures in such cases merely emphasise the objectionable side of the salt duty, and transgressors of the salt laws who are in poor circumstances should be very leniently treated.

These views unfortunately did not commend themselves to the Government of India; and it has been a great satisfaction to me to have had an opportunity of proving their correctness in China. At different times, in bygone years, much consideration was given by able men in India to the question of the salt duty, but in recent years it has not been sufficiently recognised that a successful administration of the salt revenue requires some training and intelligence.

But all this is a digression. In the course of my tour through Kashmir I had two days' bear-driving in the Achibal reserved forest and the woods in the vicinity. The forest was cut into rides, and, as the beaters came through the strips of cover, any bears or other animals which

were in the cover bolted across the rides. I had shot one small black bear, and was having the last beat of the day. A Kashmiri shikari was with me, and he had a shot-gun loaded with ball. I had my ·500 black-powder Express. The shikari was looking up the ride, and I was looking down it. I had not told him to shoot, but had not forbidden him to do so. As the beat proceeded the shikari saw what he thought was a pig at the edge of the jungle, and I turned round to have a shot at it. As I turned a fine bear broke from the jungle and crossed the ride at a gallop. I fired when the beast was on my right front about fifty yards from me, and the shikari, who was standing on my right, fired immediately afterwards. The bear reached the cover on the other side of the ride, and there fell dead on his back with his four paws in the air. He had his winter coat, and it was impossible to see any bullet-marks. The shikaris, hoping for a reward, all said that I had killed the bear, but I was by no means sure of this, and the carcase was brought to the rest-house, at which I was staying, to be skinned. When the skin was removed I was informed that there was only one bullet-hole in the bear's body, and that the bullet had passed right through him. I was much disappointed, but fortunately walked over to the fire, where the animal had been skinned, to have a look at the carcase. It was dark, but by the firelight I saw that the hole of exit of the bullet was round and smooth, while the hole of entry had jagged edges. At my direction, a search was made inside the animal, and the

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mushroomed core of my Express bullet was found in the bear's heart, and a small piece of the bullet in the hide on the far side. The shikari's bullet had gone through the bear's heart by the hole made by my bullet, and had passed out of the animal. We had both fired at the same angle, but that we should both have made perfect bull's-eyes at a galloping animal and hit it in exactly the same place was an extraordinary coincidence.

My next encounter with a bear was an exciting one. I was marching in the Balaghat district of the Central Provinces in the cold weather of 1907–9 with a small camp; and for several days I had preceded my two carts in the hope of meeting sambur on the road at dawn. At that time I had not shot a good sambur stag, and was very anxious to do so. On one particular morning I was late, and the cook's cart started off a minute or two before I was ready. Almost immediately the men came running back to say that a splendid stag was standing on the road, but, of course, by the time I arrived at the place he had gone. I was much annoyed and was strolling along feeling decidedly sulky, when one of the men from the camp behind me ran up to say that there was a bear in the open plain. The road ran along the side of a forest with a strip of unburnt grass about fifty yards wide on the other side, and beyond the grass was an open plain. I was at first incredulous, but eventually turned back; and there, sure enough, was a bear far from any cover in the plain, and at a considerable distance from the forest. By this time it was near sunrise,

and the bear, almost immediately after I saw him, started off at a canter for the forest. I had not recovered from my annoyance in regard to the sambur, and made no attempt to take up a strategical position, but simply marked the bear's line and then stood on the road and waited for him. When the bear was about one-third of the way through the patch of grass he saw me standing in front of him on the road and raised his head, and I took the opportunity to fire. The shot was well placed, but did not inflict a mortal wound. He made a tremendous row and flailed his two forearms about, and I fired the second barrel at his chest. At the shot he charged me straight, and I turned and retreated, reloading as I did so, but expecting every moment to feel the bear's claws or teeth in my back. Fortunately, however, I had shot straight, and before he reached me the bear fell dead. Mihtab Khan was standing near me with my Rigby-Mauser in his hand, but he did not fire, and had not even removed the sight protector. It was my business to see the thing through, and he was merely an interested spectator.

The bear was a large one, and was very old, and his coat bore the scars of many fights.

After this I shot the three black Himalayan bears and the three sloth-bears referred to in Chapters VIII and IX without any particular excitement, but in the early part of the year 1913, when I visited India for the third time, after my retirement from the Indian Civil Service, I had a somewhat remarkable experience with bears. I arrived in India about Christmas 1912,

and marched for some days with my friend Mr. Hart, when he was on a tour of inspection in the Yeotmal district of Berar. While Mr. Hart and Mr. Malcolm, the Deputy Conservator, were inspecting the forests, I amused myself by still-hunting. Sloth-bears in this part of India are numerous, but the odds against meeting one in daylight are considerable.

On the morning of the 27th of January, in the course of a stroll with a Gond forest guard, I came across a male bear and shot him, killing him with a single shot. In the evening of the 28th of January, the guard and I visited a grove of wild plum-trees at dark, and found a bear there, which I shot. The first bullet laid him low, but, to prevent any trouble, as it was dusk, I put a second bullet into him. On the morning of the 29th of January, walking with the same forest guard and a local native, I saw a large male bear in the distance. The local native was very frightened, and sought safety in flight, but I walked up to the bear, taking such cover as was available, and when I was about 50 yards from him I fired from a standing position and killed him.

On the 31st of January I was walking with the Gond and another Muhammadan forest guard, and the Gond saw a bear in a hole in the bank of a small ravine. My success with the other three bears had made me confident, and I simply walked to the other side of the ravine and partly ascended the bank, which was sloping on that side, until I could see a black mass in the hole. It was a she-bear with cubs, and apparently

she was lying on her back, as I could see her arms moving. I fired into the hole, my idea being that the shot would bring her out, and that she would devote a few seconds to lamentation, during which time I would reload and have the two barrels ready for the subsequent encounter. But the old lady burst from the hole with a howl of rage and pain, gave one flounder as my bullet had broken the off foreleg near the paw, and then came for me on three legs at a good pace. I had begun to reload, but I was not more than 25 yards from the hole, and saw at once that I had no time for this. Steadying myself therefore for the shot, I dropped her with a bullet through the brain from the second barrel at five yards' distance. It was a close shave, as she really meant business. She charged me with such directness that I think she must have been watching me from the hole. There were three small cubs in the hole, which we destroyed.

My companions, though they were in the forest for at least as many hours in the day as I was, did not see a bear. The natives, on the 1st of February, when we were returning on elephants from an unsuccessful beat for a tiger, said that they had seen three bears running away; but they were not seen by any of us. Hart shot a good sambur, and Malcolm shot a fine panther, sitting up in the evening over a kill, but most of the shooting fell to my lot.

On the 2nd of February Mr. Hart continued his tour, and, as game appeared to be abundant, I remained in camp at the place where I had shot the she-bear.

On the same day I was walking with the two forest guards in the afternoon. The sun was still high in the heaven, and the time for still-hunting had not arrived, when, much to our surprise, we saw three bears, a she-bear and two nearly full-grown cubs, coming towards us at a canter through the grass. These probably were the three bears which the natives said they had seen on the 1st of February. My ·450 was loaded, and I had two cartridges somewhere in my pockets, but I was not expecting to see game so early in the afternoon, and was not properly prepared for a battle. The bears were coming fast through the grass, and there was not much time for reflection, and the encounter with the she-bear had made me cautious. I tried, therefore, to shoot the leading bear, which was one of the cubs, as it was coming towards me. The grass partly covered the animal, and I wounded it only, whereupon it gave a squawk and ran all the faster in my direction. I allowed it to pass me, which it did within a few yards, and then fired the second barrel. This produced a second shriek, but evidently neither of the wounds was serious. I then turned round and found that the old she-bear was looking at me from a distance of about twenty yards. Her appearance indicated surprise rather than anger, but my rifle was unloaded and the situation was unpleasant and I hunted anxiously in my pockets for the two cartridges. After some time I found one and loaded one barrel; but, as I did not know where the third bear was, I maintained an attitude of observation, and we faced each other

for several seconds. The wounded bear had by this time swung round, and the mother joined it and retreated. As she moved off I fired and wounded her badly, but both of them got away though we followed them for some distance.

The third bear, as the natives subsequently informed me, bolted in the opposite direction at the first shot.

My tactics on this occasion were faulty. There was a bush near us; and, if I had sat down behind this and allowed the bears to come close up, I might have shot the lot. I was, however, taken aback by their unexpected appearance in bright sunlight; and, as they were coming fast towards us, I had not much time either to think what to do or to get my cartridges ready.

On the 3rd of February I was hunting with the Gond forest guard in the morning, and we saw a bear in thick cover. He was partly hidden by rocks and brushwood, but I had the ·350 magazine-rifle with me, and thought that I could kill him with the aid of the telescope sight. I accordingly took a shot at him. The shot was a difficult one, and I either missed or only slightly wounded the bear, which immediately disappeared in the bushes. While I was trying to get another shot at him a second bear, which I had not seen, descended from a tree close by the spot. He descended rapidly, but, as he reached the ground, I had a shot at him with the ·450, but the bullet struck a sapling, and he also disappeared.

I then crossed into the Chanda district to try and shoot a tiger. Shortly after my arrival in the district I went out in the afternoon with a

shikari, whom I had employed, to look for tracks. The shikari was leading the way with my ·450 rifle on his shoulder, and we were walking along a forest ride. The shikari was looking on the ground, and over his shoulder I saw a bear emerge from the grass and enter the ride at about 120 or 130 yards' distance. I seized the rifle and fired from a standing position and knocked him over. He jumped up and ran back into the grass, and out on to the ride walked a second bear. I knocked him over with the second barrel, but he also jumped up and ran back into the grass. One of the two we found badly wounded in the grass, a few yards from the place where they were knocked over. The other got away, though we followed the track, and there was much blood, for a long distance.

A few days after this I saw a solitary she-bear, and shot her.

By this time I was in constant expectation of the appearance of a bear, but, although I hunted for some days after this, I saw no more. On the whole, I did well with the bears. The bag consisted of six full-grown animals and three cubs, while three got away wounded, and two, which were in difficult ground, escaped apparently unhurt. I made notes, in the book in which I kept the log of my fishing expeditions, of the days on which I met the bears in the Yeotmal district, as the number of them which I came across in the eight days appeared to be remarkable.

In the course of this expedition I shot, in addition to the bears, a good chital stag in the

Chanda district, and also a good panther in Yeotmal, which I got in a beat; but the season's shoot was in another respect an unlucky one. I lost the finest panther I have ever seen by a combination of bad luck and mismanagement, and, as he had killed a man a day or two before, it was particularly annoying.

I sat up for him over a kill with Mrs. Hart, and he came before dark, offering me a shot, which I particularly fancy, a diagonal shot through the shoulder. The machan had, however, been tied very high from the ground, and the bullet, on striking the shoulder, ran down the leg instead of passing into the body. The panther was knocked over and lay on his back with his legs in the air motionless, and, thinking he was finished, I very stupidly did not put a second bullet into him. When I turned to speak to Mrs. Hart he recovered consciousness, and got away with a shattered shoulder.

We followed him on the next day, and I had a glimpse of him in the grass, but unfortunately I was on a pad-elephant, and although I can shoot very fairly well from a howdah, I never have been able to shoot from a sitting position on a pad-elephant, and I fired and missed him. The mahout then took the elephant in the wrong direction; and, as the bleeding had stopped, the panther could not again be found.

I also missed two tigers. We had one beat in the Yeotmal district in which a tiger was in the beat. Malcolm had a shot at him, but missed, and the tiger passed to the rear of the machans, and stood offering me a fairly good shot. I

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fired, but the bullet struck a sapling, about three inches in diameter, which was partly covering the body of the tiger, and which I was unable to see from my machan, as the distance was considerable. The aim was a little high, but the bullet would, I think, have struck the tiger but for this obstacle.

The second tiger I missed in a beat in the Chanda district when I was alone. The tiger was making determined efforts to break out of the beat on my left; and the Stops, who knew their business, were turning him back. I ought to have trusted the Gonds, but I was afraid that the tiger would break out without giving me a shot; and, as he dashed back into the beat from the nearest Stop on my left, I caught a glimpse of him in the undergrowth and fired.

I thought that I had missed, but could not be sure; and, not wishing to endanger the beaters, I stopped the beat, and the tiger got away. If I had allowed the beat to proceed, I might have got the tiger, as he was still in the beat, and the Gonds were beating well; but I was unwilling to expose them to an unfair risk.

The shot was a difficult one, but I ought not to have fired at all; and the fact that my last two shots at tigers were misses is one which it gives me no pleasure to remember.

CHAPTER XI

MY SECOND EXPEDITION TO EAST AFRICA

I MADE a second expedition to British East Africa in 1909–10, after my retirement from the Indian Civil Service. My intention was to make a prolonged tour, and I at first thought of travelling alone. Colonel Gimlette of the I.M.S., who had also recently returned from the service, had, however, formed similar plans; and, at the suggestion of a mutual friend, we agreed to travel together. Colonel Gimlette had taken his passage for Mombassa in a steamer leaving Europe a few days earlier than the steamer I had arranged to travel by, so that he arrived in the country before me; but, after shooting for some days at Simba, he waited for me at Nairobi.

We were both of one mind about the expedition. We both wished to see something of the country off the beaten track, and we were both specially anxious to shoot lion and buffalo, and also, if possible, an elephant. We decided, therefore, to march from Nairobi round Kenia Mountain, and then down the northern Guaso Nyiro River to the Lorian swamp, a place which up to this time had been visited by only one or two Europeans, and which was said to be much frequented by elephants.

We were both well on in years, and had had long Indian service; and, by a curious coincidence, Gimlette, like myself, had sustained serious injury to one of his eyes at polo. His injured eye, however, was the left one, so that the accident did not interfere with his rifle-shooting. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, we completed successfully a long and adventurous journey, and made a very good bag. We were both hardy and inured to travel, and Gimlette was a particularly good rider.

For gun-bearers, servants, and beaters we both placed ourselves in the hands of Messrs. Newland and Tarlton at Nairobi, and Gimlette also obtained a tent and stores from the same firm; and we were both entirely satisfied with the men and the articles which were supplied to us. To meet the possibility of one of us failing in health, and wishing to return, we organised two separate safaris; but Gimlette subsequently discarded his headman; and my headman, a Somali named Abdu, a most capable and intelligent man, although he could neither read nor write, was placed in charge of all the porters. Gimlette had two gun-bearers, a Wakamba named Mabruki, a capital fellow, both brave and cool-headed, and a Swahili, whose name I do not remember; and he had also a Swahili body-servant, who served him very well. I also had two gun-bearers, Tagarru, a Somali, and Saasita, a Wakamba. Tagarru was brave and intelligent, and knew a little English, which came in very useful. He was arrogant and boastful, but he was not a bad fellow, and on the whole I got

on very well with him. My body-servant, Ali by name, and the cook were also Somalis. Ali was lazy, and it was difficult to get him out of bed in the early morning, but in other respects he gave great satisfaction. The Somalis had their own rations, rice, *ghi* (clarified butter) and sugar, but they remained content with these rations and left me in possession of mine. Ali had the key of all my store-boxes, but I did not detect any pilfering, and he worked a Doulton's filter well and carefully. The cook received good pay, but he was a failure : and I believe that most of our cooking was done by the negro porter who was attached to the kitchen.

If you wish to be reasonably comfortable on a shooting expedition in Africa you must take a good many stores. The little oribi is good eating, and the Grantii and Thomsonii gazelles are passable; but most of the other antelope are terribly tough, and a mincing-machine is a necessary part of your equipment. Minced hartebeest I could eat, but a hartebeest steak was beyond me; and a water-buck, unless you are actually starving, is untouchable. Even the impala, which some people consider good, is, in my opinion, very insipid. A sportsman, however, does not go to Africa to eat; and with the aid of tea, sugar, biscuits, jam and canned fruit, and some whisky, sparklet syphons and a good filter, you can make yourself comfortable enough.

Gimlette had a ·470 D.B. cordite and a ·350 bore magazine rifle, and I had my ·450 D.B. cordite rifle, and a Rigby-Mauser with a ·350

bore, fitted with a telescope-sight, and also a spare ·450, which was lent to me for the expedition by my friend Mr. Bird, and we both had shot-guns. I had made good shooting with a ·275 Rigby-Mauser rifle, both with and without a telescope-sight, during my first expedition to Africa; but wounds made by a small-bore rifle bleed very little, and animals mortally wounded by them are not infrequently lost. I have seen a chital stag in India gallop nearly 200 yards without leaving a drop of blood, after being shot through the heart; and the African antelopes have remarkable vitality. I therefore purchased the ·350 for the expedition from John Rigby & Co., and found it a very satisfactory weapon.

All told, we had eighty-two porters. A porter's ration is 1½ lbs. of beans per diem, and the porters expect to get this ration even when they have an abundance of meat to eat; and food for the negro porters and for the Somalis for some days represented many of the loads. For riding purposes we purchased three Abyssinian mules from Newland, Tarlton & Co., which turned out well and were a great comfort. We had also three or four Askaris, with Martini rifles and a few cartridges, for the protection of the porters while they were on the march.

Before we started I spent one day in a hunt for wildebeest in the plain near Nairobi. The hunt was unsuccessful, but I saw a very interesting sight. The African hunting-dog, as stated by Mr. Selous, has a fine turn of speed. A big dog,

in my presence, chased single-handed a three-quarter grown Thomsonii gazelle buck, which I had watched for some time, and which appeared to be full of life and spirits, and before they disappeared in the distance, going at a great pace, he had compelled his buck to jink once. I was on foot and was unable to see the end of the chase, but the dog appeared to have counted the cost and to be determined to win. He galloped, to commence with, parallel to the buck; and, as he was at a considerable distance from me, I did not know what the animal was, but the Wakamba, who had charge of my mules during the expedition, was with me, and said that it was a fine specimen of the hunting-dog (*imbu mazuri*) and I have no doubt he was right. It was certainly not a hunting leopard. If these animals were more numerous, they would probably be as destructive of the game as the red-dogs are in India. They do not appear to attack men; but my friend Mr. Currie told me that on one occasion, when he had shot six out of a large pack, near Nairobi, the other dogs began barking at him; and, as he had only three cartridges remaining, he thought it prudent to leave the others alone.

We marched from Nairobi to the Ithanga Hills, which are frequently visited by buffaloes, and camped for a few days at the farm of Messrs. Swift and Rutherfoord, while we were hunting the hills. These gentlemen entertained us most hospitably, and told us some very interesting stories of their early difficulties. Lions had, at the outset, caused them much trouble and anxiety,

and, even after we left the neighbourhood, lions raided the farm again and killed a pig. The lion, like the tiger, appears to have a weakness for pork.

We found no buffaloes, but I shot a good bush-buck in the hills, and also shot oribi in the country between the farm and Fort Hall.

At the farm we had a little trouble with the porters. We had Wakamba, Baganda, Kavirondo, and a few Kikuyu men, and some lawless spirits among them interfered with the Kikuyu labourers on the farm, and had to be punished by a flogging. A case of theft occurred also, which necessitated an elaborate investigation. Abdu accused two of the porters of stealing some of the Somalis' rice; and I asked Mr. Swift, who knew the Swahili language, to inquire into the case. The porters put up a good defence, and said that they had bought the rice, which they were accused of stealing, at Fort Hall. They had been at Fort Hall on the day before, and the defence was plausible. Abdu first put forward the weak argument that the negroes would not have purchased Somalis' rice, as it was of superior quality; and the case was going against him. He then said that the negroes, when committing the theft, had left a trail of rice behind them from the Somalis' camp to their own tents; and an inspection of the ground, which was made in the presence of the porters, showed that this was the case. The spokesman of the two accused saw that the game was up; and, when a sentence of flogging was announced, lay down quite resignedly to receive it. I remarked to Mr.

Swift, "I think we may fairly claim to have sifted this case to the bottom"; and the punishment was duly inflicted. The turn of the other man then came, and he tried to put the whole of the blame on his more voluble companion; but it was clear that he also was guilty, and accordingly received a dozen.

These two cases had an excellent effect, and during the four months that I was on tour I had no more trouble with my porters. Abdu had fights with two of Gimlette's men, but in one of these cases Abdu was to blame, as he tried to make the man surrender some lion's fat to which he was properly entitled. Gimlette's porters had been selected by another headman; and in the circumstances it was surprising that there was not more friction and trouble between them and Abdu.

From Messrs. Swift and Rutherfoord's farm we marched to Fort Hall, and from Fort Hall to Nyeri in the west of Kenia Mountain. We spent Christmas Day at Nyeri, and the District Officer and his wife kindly invited us to a Christmas dinner, which they were giving to all the residents of the Station and the vicinity. The head of one of the guests was in bandages, the result of an extraordinary encounter which he and his chum had had with a leopard some days before. They had begun farming, and had constructed a house on the farm not far from Nyeri. While they were in the house a leopard chased their dog into the room in which they were, and managed, as he entered, to slam the door, so that he was a prisoner in the room.

There was a gun in the corner of the room; but, when one of the men moved towards the gun, the leopard attacked him and clawed him badly. When the other man went to the rescue he also was mauled. Eventually, with great difficulty, they opened the door, and the leopard departed, having injured both the men, while they had been unable to retaliate. Both the men, however, escaped blood-poisoning, and were recovering from their injuries.

From Nyeri we marched along the northern slopes of Kenia to the Station of Meru on the north-east of the mountain. The road was said to have been closed for some time owing to attacks upon travellers by man-eating lions, but it was again in use when we made our journey. We passed through some beautifully watered country, with clear streams running down from the mountain, and had fine views of the glacier on the summit of Kenia; but we neither saw nor heard anything of lions along the road. There was, in fact, very little game of any kind, as we were high up on the slopes of the mountain; and, to break the monotony of the march, we deviated from the route and made our way northwards into the plain to do a little shooting. We shot Baisa Oryx, which takes the place of the Grantii and Thomsonii gazelles in this part of the country, and I think I also shot a good impala and a good specimen of the hunting-dog at this time, but am not quite sure about this. One of the oryx I shot, when lying crippled on the ground, struck out viciously with his horns, the blow being delivered by a rapid backward sweep of the head

and neck. My men, on one occasion, said that they had seen the forms in the grass of a number of lions, but we did not see nor hear anything of these animals, and the shooting on this part of the journey was not attended with any adventures. After halting and shooting in the plain country for some days, we continued our march to Meru.

At the Station we met Mr. Horne, the District Officer, and his assistant. Seeing that some of our porters were hefty fellows, Mr. Horne challenged us to a tug-of-war with his Merus. Our men readily accepted the challenge, but they were no match for the stalwart Merus, who hauled them over the line easily enough. The Merus, owing doubtless to the fact that they reside at a high altitude and in a cool climate, are fine specimens of the negro race, and their affability was overpowering, every man we met being anxious to shake hands with us. Sir Charles Elliot, in his book on the East African Protectorate, which was published in 1905, says that the natives north and east of Kenia are less friendly than the natives in most parts of Africa. In 1909–10, however, we found the natives both at Meru and Embu most friendly, and had no trouble with the inhabitants of the country in any part of our journey.

From Meru we marched northwards, following one of the tributaries of the Guaso Nyiro, and struck the river at the place where it is crossed by the road or track leading to Marsobit, on the Abyssinian border.

There were numerous herds of Baisa Oryx

on the plain here ; and, wishing to obtain a better head than I had yet got, I paid the prescribed fee which authorised me to shoot a third buck. I also paid the prescribed fee of £5 which secured for me the permission to shoot a second buffalo. Thinking that the oryx would keep until our return, I did not hunt them at this time, and when we returned from the Lorian swamp hardly any were left on the plain, the others having all migrated.

From this point on the route our journey became a difficult and adventurous one. For four marches down the Guaso Nyiro River there were a few scattered kraals, but no food or supplies of any kind could be obtained from the natives. The remaining eight marches to the Lorian swamp lay through uninhabited waste. We were warned that we might possibly meet raiding parties of Somalis from Jubaland, but in this country we did not see a single human being. Special arrangements for food had therefore to be made. One day's food for eighty-two porters was 123 lbs. of beans, and the bags of beans which we purchased from Indian traders at Meru and other places, and which were supposed to contain 60 lbs. in each bag, rarely contained more than 50 lbs., and very often less. A bag of beans was, however, usually one porter's load. By great good fortune we met Mr. Archer, C.I.E., who was then the District Officer at Marsobit; and he allowed us to take all the bags of beans we could carry from the Government Stores at the river-crossing, on the understanding that the bags taken would be replaced by bags sent

from Meru. We also arranged to have a relief expedition of thirty porters, whom we employed temporarily for the purpose, despatched to meet us with bags of beans on our return journey up the river. By these arrangements we accomplished our journey without any appreciable shortage of food for the porters.

Mr. Archer told me two very interesting shikar stories, which I hope he will not object to my relating.

He had with him a wizened Wanderobo, who had served with Neumann, the great elephant-hunter. On one occasion, when Mr. Archer was hunting with an English friend, the Wanderobo saw a lion, and, as the lion was moving away, Mr. Archer put a bullet into him. Following him up, they found him lying in some bushes at the foot of a slope. He was apparently dead, and a Sudanese orderly went up to the carcase to drag it out of the bushes. Before doing so, he asked Mr. Archer if he would not take a photograph of the animal. Mr. Archer accordingly exchanged his rifle for a camera, and his friend also parted with his rifle. While Mr. Archer was adjusting the camera, the lion suddenly raised himself with a growl and charged. He seized his rifle and fired two shots, but failed to stop the lion, and then turned to run, with the lion in pursuit. The Wanderobo, as the lion bounded past him, sprang forward and drove his assegai clean through him, killing him on the spot. Mr. Archer showed me a photograph of the Wanderobo, standing erect with the assegai in his hand with which he had

killed the lion. The assegai was bent, but was not broken.

On another occasion Mr. Archer was charged by a tusker elephant, which he had wounded. He planted two bullets in the animal's chest from a ·450 cordite rifle, but failed to turn him, and the situation was saved by a Sudanese orderly. When the elephant charged the orderly deliberately knelt down and took a steady shot at his forehead with his Martini rifle, and this shot turned him. Unfortunately I cannot remember whether the elephant was eventually bagged or not. The story was told in the course of a discussion as to the relative merits of the head shot or the heart shot for an elephant. Many sportsmen, who do not know the meaning of fear and intend to bag their elephant at any cost, appear to prefer the heart shot ; but, as was shown on this occasion, a well-placed head shot will turn a charging elephant when a body shot will not do so.

We crossed the Guaso Nyiro to the northern or left bank, and from the river-crossing we marched into the unknown in the heart of Equatorial Africa. Our porters, with their rations of beans to eat, and the prospect of some good gorges of meat, marched along, making light of their loads, and came into camp blowing horns, after marches of about 14 miles in length. A porter's load, as limited by regulation, is 60 lbs.; but only the boxes of stores weighed as much as this, and these were carried by the best porters. The tents were rapidly pitched, and then the porters dispersed to bathe or to fish or to hunt

for honey. For them, as for us, it was a gigantic picnic.

We did not make any zariba or thorn fence at night, but pitched our tents in the shape of a half-moon, with a large bonfire in front. Our tents were in the centre, with the cook's tent and the trophies on the right. Then came the Somalis, who, as superior individuals, occupied the post of honour, and the tents of the porters were ranged in order round the rest of the semi-circle according to the tribe to which they belonged.

My warnings about the danger to be apprehended from the crocodiles in the river were unheeded, and the bathers and the fishermen were very reckless, but for some days all went well. With the most primitive tackle, the negroes used to catch large quantities of coarse fish, which they broiled on sticks over a fire; and a wild bees' nest was a great find. On one occasion Saasita handed me a piece of honeycomb full of grubs, out of the centre of which he had taken an enormous bite, with the remark: "Mazuri Sana" (It is awful good). He meant well; but it is hardly necessary to say that I did not take the second bite.

The contempt of the Somali for the negro porters was always a source of amusement to me. "Those damned fellows, they stink so," was a favourite remark of Abdu's. On the whole, however, he treated them kindly and fairly, though he apparently did not like Saasita, and I occasionally had to use some diplomacy to keep the peace.

Some of our porters, though they were good

and willing workers, were absolute savages, and cries of "Nyama, nyama" (animal) used to follow us when we went out to hunt in the evenings. Any meat, even that of a rhino, was better than none; but the buffalo and the zebra appeared to be in great favour. When there was no time to cook the meat it was eaten raw, and an oryx, which I shot on the march to Meru, was devoured in this way. On another occasion, on our return journey from the Lorian, Gimlette shot a Grévy's zebra, a large animal, which ought to have provided a meal for the whole camp. About ten men were sent out to bring in the meat; and, as the camp had been short of meat for some days, Gimlette said they started off leaping in the air like antelopes. After about two hours Abdu came to me and said, "Those damned fellows eat the whole of that zebra"; and only the thighs of the two hindlegs reached the camp.

Savages though they were, there was something about them which was attractive. It is frequently said that Africans have no gratitude, but I had a friendly leave-taking with all my men, and Saasita and the mule attendant, who was also a Wakamba, came down to the railway station at Nairobi to see me off, several days after they had been paid their wages and discharged.

When I first visited Africa I was advised by a friend, who had had considerable experience of the country, to carry my own rifle, and to have it in front of me always, ready to shoot at a moment's notice. The advice was perfectly sound, but it did not suit me. When much

interested in my surroundings, I am not as careful with my feet as I ought to be, and the rifle might have been damaged by a fall. The big rifle also, upon which I most relied, was so heavy that to carry it for the eight or nine hours of each day that I was marching or hunting would have been a serious strain. The weather, especially when we were at or near the Lorian, was hot, as we were on the Equator and could not have been very much above sea-level; and, although the sun in East Africa is not as powerful as the sun in India, it is quite trying enough, and induces a very intense thirst. I therefore drilled Saasita to walk one pace in front of me, among trees, or in high grass, with the ·450 rifle on his shoulder held muzzle forward, and gave the ·350, with the telescope sighted to 200 yards, to Tagarru. I have always been able to shoot very much better from a standing position with a double-barrelled than with a single-barrelled rifle; and I accordingly used the ·450 for any quick shot that offered at close range, and used the ·350 for long shots. The cartridges for the two rifles I carried in a belt round my own waist; and, if we were expecting to meet dangerous game, I of course carried the big rifle myself.

This arrangement worked very satisfactorily. I may have missed one or two shots, but the advantage of having my arms fresh and untired when I did take the big rifle more than compensated for this; and the rifle was in my hands in a second or two after we sighted big game. Saasita could not have run away without giving me an opportunity of seizing the rifle; and,

to give him his due, he never attempted to do this. If I happened to glance over my shoulders on occasions when a rhino was snorting in front of us, I saw always a broad grin on Saasita's face, although he was standing with no weapon in his hand. He may have thought, reasonably enough, that, if the necessity should arise, he could get out of the way before I could; but my experience has been that the African is a brave man, and, if properly treated, can usually be relied on. Tagarru marched three or four paces in front of us. He kept a good look-out, and made very good use of my Zeiss glasses. When riding on the mule, however, owing to the higher elevation, I was often able to see game before it could be seen by the men on foot.

I do not for a moment suggest that these methods can be recommended for adoption by others; but they certainly suited me, and I obtained better results by the use of them than I could have obtained in any other way. With the telescope-sight, I could usually make certain of a shot up to a distance of 250 yards, and I lost very few wounded animals.

Some of the scenery on the lower part of the Guaso Nyiro River was very beautiful, but the country away from the river was arid and uninteresting. We hunted separately, one of us following the river to the camping-ground, and the other making a detour and striking the river somewhere near the spot where the camp was likely to be. In this way we did not interfere with each other; and any danger of a mishap, such as I met with on my first visit to Africa,

was avoided. In the desert country north of the river a sportsman losing his way would have been in a very serious plight.

Game was abundant along the river. Rhinoceroses were very numerous, and we met with elephants on two occasions on our way to the swamp. Lions also appeared to be fairly numerous. The Baisa Oryx became less abundant as we went eastward, and its place was taken by the Gerenuk gazelle. The Grévy, or mountain zebra, replaced the Burchell's zebra, which is so abundant in the country to the south. The giraffes near the river appeared to be of a different species from those we had met with farther to the south. The body was smaller, and the yellow colouring was less vivid, and the black patches were darker. We did not shoot a giraffe, though I might have done so on more than one occasion. The animal is interesting and beautiful, but no part of it is worth preserving as a trophy. On one occasion a giraffe stood on the other side of some bushes, about 50 yards from me, and looked at me for some time in mild surprise, I being probably the first man the creature had ever seen.

I do not remember seeing any hartebeest east of the place where we crossed the river. There were a few lesser kudu, and dikdik were very abundant. Impala and water-buck were also fairly numerous, and the impala carried splendid heads. On several occasions I met large numbers of ferocious-looking baboons, which I personally was disposed to treat with respect, but which fled in terror at the approach of any one of the

negroes. Venomous snakes, both cobras and puff-adders, were numerous, and the river was full of crocodiles.

On one occasion, near the Lorian swamp, I saw a very curious snake. There was nothing remarkable about the body, but it had a shiny-looking red head, from the shape of which it did not appear to be poisonous. I tried to kill it with my stick, but it eluded me with much agility in the grass and bushes. Suddenly, in its panic, it made a dash straight at Tagarru, who fled in terror amid roars of laughter from the negroes. The snake, by this manœuvre, made good its escape.

Rhinoceroses and dikdik abounded in the thorn-bush at a little distance from the river, and in this country, when beckoned by Tagarru, I did not know whether I was expected to shoot a rhino or an animal which is not much bigger than a large English hare. The most notable features of the shooting were the number of the rhinoceroses and the excellence of the impala. I shot four impala in the course of the expedition with horns of 27, $27\frac{1}{4}$, $27\frac{1}{2}$, and $31\frac{5}{8}$ inches, the record impala head that has been obtained in North-West Rhodesia up to the present time, according to Rowland Ward's book, having been $22\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Much nonsense is written about the deterioration of heads owing to shooting. I have even seen it suggested that the inferiority of the horns of the Burchell's rhinoceros, which have been shot upon the upper Nile, to those of animals shot by Gordon Cumming in South Africa is due to

this reason. I do not believe that there has been any deterioration of the heads of genuine wild animals. The length of an animal's horns depends very largely upon its habitat. The horns of the impala in the vicinity of the northern Guaso Nyiro evidently attain a development which is unknown in Central and South Africa. The horns of the sambur stag in the Vindhya and Satpura Mountains in India may attain to a length of 50 inches, and a head of 48 inches has, I understand, been obtained in recent years. Forsyth, in *The Highlands of Central India*, published in 1871, says that the largest sambur head he ever saw was one which he shot himself, which had horns 41 inches long and 8½ thick in the thinnest part of the beam, and that 30 to 35 inches is the average length of the horns of mature stags. Forsyth was a keen sportsman, and, as Assistant Conservator of Forests under the Central Provinces' Administration, which was formed in 1861, he was probably the first man who shot with a rifle in many parts of the Provinces. His sambur head was no doubt a very fine one, but many finer heads have been shot since, and his estimate of the average length of the horns of mature stags appears to be too low. It is clear, therefore, that the horns of the sambur have not deteriorated in the past sixty years. The sambur is also found in Ceylon and Mysore, but 30 inches is, as I understand, considered there to be a fine head. In Assam and Burma also, the heads obtainable are far inferior to those of the Central Provinces.

We reached the Lorian in safety, but the

shooting there did not come up to our expectations. We saw no signs of elephants, and the other shooting was not particularly good, and it was difficult to hunt amongst the high reeds of the swamp. The mosquitoes also were in countless myriads; and after 5 p.m. even the negroes broke off boughs to keep the insects from their faces. The camp-fires kept them away from the tents, but hunting in the evening was difficult and disagreeable. The place offered few attractions to induce us to remain, and it appeared to be decidedly malarious. In the circumstances we only halted at the swamp for one day, and then began our return journey up the river to Meru.

After reaching Meru we marched across the eastern slopes of Kenia to Embu. The scenery was in places very fine, but travelling was difficult. Streams, coursing down the side of the mountain, have furrowed out deep watercourses with precipitous sides, and the road crossed these at right angles. Riding across these watercourses was impossible, and most of this part of the journey had to be performed on foot. We saw no game, and did not fire a shot while we were on the road. From Embu we made our way down the Rupingazi tributary to the Tana River; and, after crossing the Tana, we camped for some time in the vicinity of Juja farm, and within sight of Donya Sabuk hill; and in this neighbourhood we had some good shooting. From there we marched to Nairobi.

The journey occupied three and a half months, and we travelled during that time, according

to our estimate, about 900 miles, apart from the distances covered in shooting excursions to and from our camps. We had our best shooting on the Guaso Nyiro and Rupingazi rivers, and in the country near the Juja estate.

Whenever there was anything to shoot I was out on each day from daylight until 12 or 1 o'clock, and again in the afternoon from 3 p.m. until dark. It was hard work, and my weight was considerably reduced; but I do not think that I could have done what I did in the same latitude in any part of Asia. The heat in East Africa appears to be less exhausting than the heat in the south of Asia.

The mules returned with us safely and in good condition to Nairobi; and, having been found upon examination to be free from tsetse virus, they were repurchased by Newland and Tarlton at a good price. Some of the negroes said that they had seen tsetse-fly on the Guaso Nyiro; but they may have been mistaken about this. One of my mules was a docile beast, and was very comfortable to ride, and he escaped a sore back throughout the whole journey. I therefore rarely rode the other mule, though my favourite gave me several falls. When a pig or a Duiker antelope suddenly sprang up near him in the long grass, he executed a mysterious manœuvre, which almost invariably deposited me on the ground. I bore him no malice, however, as he carried me right well; and, as he was a small animal, the falls were not serious. The other mule was quiet enough, but had such a hard mouth that it was difficult to turn her readily. She was

incapacitated also for part of the time by a sore back.

Gimlette brought out a patent saddle which was warranted not to give an animal a sore back, but it gave a sore back to his mule and also to mine. My mule's back became very bad, and a surgical operation was necessary. After a desperate struggle, the mule was thrown by ten or twelve of the porters, and the resourceful Abdu lanced the swelling, and then ruthlessly crushed all the pus out of the animal's back by force. The operation was completely successful, but must have been exceedingly painful, as, when the mule got to her feet, she brayed loudly for some time. She got, however, a "bit of her own back," as the slang goes. Abdu was standing incautiously near, and the mule suddenly swung round and landed both her heels into the pit of his abdomen. Abdu "curled up on the floor," and both Gimlette and I were afraid that he must have sustained serious injury. Fortunately, however, he was only temporarily knocked out of time; and, when our anxiety on his account was relieved, the incident provided us with much merriment.

Much of the country lying between Meru and the Guaso Nyiro River was covered with small blocks of lava, which made walking difficult and uncomfortable, but the walking along the greater part of the route we followed was good. We were very little troubled also with the ticks, which make shooting on the Athi plains almost intolerable to anyone like myself, who has a horror of vermin. We both picked up jigger

fleas. Abdu extracted mine skilfully, and the place healed at once. Gimlette had a very bad foot, which made him lame and caused him a great deal of trouble.

I saw large numbers of rhinoceroses in the course of this expedition. On our march to the Lorian swamp along the Guaso Nyiro, the prevailing wind came from the north-east, and while travelling up-wind, I have seen as many as six rhinos in the day, many of them at close quarters. Tagarru appeared to be absolutely without fear of a rhino. On one occasion he beckoned me, and I moved towards him with the big rifle in my hand, and found him standing about 20 yards from a rhino's head, the animal being apparently quite unconscious of his presence. The rhino had not a good horn, and I accordingly did not shoot. One of the porters, whom we had brought with us to carry any game we might bag, followed me, and, finding himself confronted with a rhino, sprinted at his best pace for the nearest tree. This made me laugh, and the rhino, roused from his meditations, retreated into some bushes which were near. There he stood, and began snorting so indignantly that Tagarru himself suggested that we had better move away. I took Tagarru rather sharply to task for his rash conduct on this occasion; and he was more discreet in future.

On another occasion, as we were walking quietly along, there was a tremendous snorting in front of us, and three rhinos dashed out of some bushes, ran a little distance to our left front, and then turned and faced us, apparently full of curiosity.

The ground sloped from us to them, which gave me the advantage of position in the event of a charge, and the rhinos had poor horns, so I did not shoot. They stood and looked at us for some time, and my men threw stones and bits of stick at them, while I held the rifle ready in case any one of them might assume the offensive; and eventually they became tired of looking at us, and turned round and walked away. They showed no fear and no desire to attack, and, so far as I could judge, were merely curious.

In a place where rhinos were so numerous I thought that I might be able to obtain some exceptionally fine horns, and I accordingly passed rhino after rhino without shooting. By the conditions of my licence I was permitted to shoot two rhinos, and I only fired at one throughout the whole of the expedition.

I was returning on one evening with my two gun-bearers to our camp on the Guaso Nyiro, having seen nothing to shoot in the course of the afternoon, and we passed on our way a very thick leafy bush among the trees on the river-bank. The bush was moving in three different places, and we thought that some buffaloes must be browsing upon it. I had not at this time shot a buffalo, and was very anxious to do so, and, accordingly, took up my stand behind a small shrub, about breast high, which was about 25 yards from the cover, and waited in eager expectation. Presently through the leafy screen appeared the head of a water-buck. "Shoot," whispered Tagarru; "good horn." The buck had not as good horns as those which I had shot

on the occasion of my first visit to Africa, and I was expecting nobler game, and was very disappointed at the apparition. I did not shoot, therefore, and the head was almost immediately withdrawn. Then out of the bush ran a small rhino calf, about the size of a large pig ; and, while I was gazing in amazement, out walked the mother, and stood almost directly facing me, but slightly on my left front. The distance between us was less than 20 yards. She had good horns, the posterior horn being unusually long, and Tagarru excitedly whispered to me to shoot ; and I fired the right barrel of the ·450 at the point of her fore-shoulder. At the shot she dashed past us, and Tagarru fired at her with the ·350, hitting her in the lower jaw. The calf followed, squealing like a pig. The rhino ran for about 150 yards and then stood, and I fired the second barrel at her from a standing position, and knocked her over with a well-placed shot. The first shot was a deadly one, and would, I think, have killed her. The bullet fired by Tagarru lodged in the forepart of the lower jaw, and apparently caused the animal no serious injury, as it remained embedded in the bone. Both the bullets I fired at the rhino were soft-nosed.

A rhinoceros with young is not supposed to be shot, but we were at exceedingly close quarters ; and, as the calf was young, I did not know what the mother might be tempted to do. The calf, I am glad to say, survived. We were at the time on our way to the Lorian, and on our return journey some of our men saw the calf

not far from the place where I had shot the mother. It had grown considerably. The men ran after it, but it got away from them easily.

The anterior horn of the cow was 25 inches long, and the circumference round the base was 18 inches. The posterior horn was 18¼ inches long. I saw another cow rhino near the Lorian with an anterior horn of about the same length, but wanted to bag a good bull, and did not fire at her.

The cow rhino which I shot was, as above said, the only rhino at which I fired in the course of the expedition. It was, of course, only during the month that we were on the Guaso Nyiro that rhinos were exceptionally numerous; and, on our return journey, when we were working down-wind, I did not see nearly so many as I did when we were on our way to the swamp.

I may have been exceptionally fortunate in the animals I met, but I certainly formed the opinion that the rhinoceros is a much less dangerous animal than is commonly supposed. The rhino has a keen sense of smell, and, when a smell which offends him reaches his nostrils, he makes a dash up-wind to escape it. It is this dash up-wind which is often called a charge. If you are in the way the rhino will no doubt attack you, as the animal is not wanting in courage; but the rush, unless it is made from a very short distance, is easily avoided. A rhino dashing wildly into a string of porters will do much damage, as the porters, not unnaturally, throw their loads and bolt, and the rhino, finding himself in the midst of a number of men, may think that

he is cornered, and strike out in self-defence. The number of rhinos, however, which will determinedly attack and pursue a man is, I believe, very small; and an encounter can usually be declined or avoided without difficulty.

Since Mr. Selous published his *African Nature Notes and Reminiscences* in 1908, I believe that at least two gentlemen have been killed by rhinos in East Africa; but, as he says, dangerous and aggressive rhinos are exceptional, and the average rhino is a dull-sighted and inquisitive but not savage beast. Neumann, the great elephant-hunter, and Sir F. Jackson give a similar description of the animal.

A really vicious rhino is no doubt a most formidable antagonist, as he is not easily turned or stopped. The animal, considering its bulk, is surprisingly active; the horns protect its neck as it charges, and a bullet lodging in the massive bones of the head is not likely to be effective. I believe, however, that these really vicious animals are the rare exceptions.

Gimlette shot his two rhinos without difficulty, using soft-nosed bullets. The first rhino was placed *hors de combat* by a single well-placed shot, and the other was so crippled by the first shot that he was finished off without difficulty.

Gimlette had, however, one narrow escape from a wild rush or charge by a rhino. He was walking with his gun-bearer, Mabruki, in high grass, when a rhino rushed straight at them. Gimlette had nothing in his hand, but Mabruki, who had the rifle, fired it in the animal's face; and, by great good fortune, the bullet went up

the nostril into the brain, and the animal fell dead on the spot. This may have been a determined charge, and it was certainly a very unpleasant adventure, which was calculated to make Gimlette sceptical of the correctness of the views which have been above advanced. It is, however, possible that the animal was merely rushing madly up-wind. A surprise rush of this kind, if made from your immediate vicinity, is obviously more difficult to avoid than a rush made from some distance after the animal has been located.

On another occasion Gimlette and his gun-bearers had to throw themselves off a track into the bush to avoid the rush up-wind of two rhinos.

There will always be the risk of an accident with a rhino, and every possible precaution ought to be observed when you are in the proximity of one; but, as already said, I believe that a really vicious rhino is rarely met with.

I saw on one occasion, on our return journey from the Lorian, a rhino which might fairly have been described as white. It was a small animal and had small horns, and I did not shoot it; but by this time I had acquired some of Tagarru's contempt for a rhino, and stood close to this animal examining it—so close that Saasita thought I had not seen it, as it was in high grass, and came up, rather excitedly, to point it out. The animal was evidently an albino, and I am sorry now that I did not shoot it as a curiosity. I saw some very light-coloured water-buck at the Lorian; and there is a head in the Kensington Natural

History Museum of an albino water-buck, said to have been there obtained.

I took the head of the rhino I shot, and, as the skinning of the head and the drying of the skin was a troublesome business, we left some of our porters, with all the trophies, in a standing camp at the place where I shot the rhino, and picked them up on the return journey up the river.

We had no success with elephants, but might have done better with these animals if we had not been buoyed up with extravagant expectations as to the number of them we were likely to see at the Lorian swamp. On two occasions, on our way to the Lorian, we ran into elephants in the river. On the first occasion we came upon them unexpectedly when we were marching with the porters; and, before we had time to organise any plan of campaign, the elephants got our wind and stampeded. We followed the tracks for some distance, but the elephants were thoroughly scared, and were walking very fast. As Tagarru expressively said: "Him walking like buni [ostrich]." We therefore gave up the pursuit.

On this occasion we only heard the elephants, but upon one other occasion we both saw tuskers and Gimlette had a shot at one. I had made the detour on that day, and, as I returned to the river, I saw a male elephant standing under a tree in the open at some distance from the bank of the river. We approached and lay in the grass for some time, watching him from a distance of about 200 yards. He was a big animal, but

his tusks were not large, and of them one was broken, and it appeared doubtful whether the ivory would weigh the regulation 35 lbs. per tusk. I thought also that I would come across a better elephant at the Lorian, and refrained, therefore, from attacking him. After standing in our view for some time, he turned and strolled leisurely into the jungle by the river. This was the only elephant I saw in the course of the expedition.

Gimlette on the same morning fell in with elephants on the river, and had a shot at a tusker when he was crossing the river. He fired at the heart with his ·470 cordite rifle, and the elephant dropped to the shot, but recovered rapidly, and, scrambling to his feet, disappeared in the jungle on the other side of the river. Gimlette and Mabruki followed and came up with him; and Gimlette put two more bullets into him. The elephant then charged, and Gimlette and Mabruki became separated and took cover behind trees. Gimlette had no more cartridges, and Mabruki, who had the reserve supply, was unwilling to leave the tree behind which he had taken shelter. The elephant availed himself of the lull in the battle to make good his escape.

If we had not gone to the Lorian, and had halted for some days at or near the place where we saw the elephants, and had hunted carefully the ground on both sides of the river, we might have shot elephants, though, if we had done this, we should not have had the satisfaction of reaching our objective, and seeing the swamp. At the Lorian, where we expected so much, we

did not see any elephants or any fresh tracks of elephants; but, in the time at our disposal, it was only possible to explore the country in the vicinity of the place where the river enters the swamp. This appeared, however, to be the most likely part of the swamp for sport.

The crocodiles in the river were very daring and ferocious, though they did not appear to attain to a large size. On our way to the Lorian the porters fished and bathed with impunity, and no mishap occurred. On one day, however, I shot a water-buck which entered the river. The water was shallow on the side of the river on which I and my men were standing, but was deep under the other bank. The buck was badly wounded, and stood in the shallow water, and, while I was considering what to do, a crocodile caught sight of him and swam up-stream to the attack. When he started he must have been at least 100 yards from the buck, and he swam near the surface of the water with the eyes and part of the head showing, and his tail churning up the water behind him like the screw of a steamer. The eyes gleamed with ferocity. My Somalis were not obtrusive in their devotions, and this was the only occasion upon which I heard Tagarru call upon the name of God; but the "Allah" which he uttered conveyed expressively the disgust and horror which the sight inspired. A crocodile or an alligator is a particularly loathsome brute. The crocodile's head did not offer much of a mark, and the body was submerged; but the buck was not more than 50 yards from me, and when he was near the

buck I fired. There was a great swirl in the water, and I thought that I had hit him; but we found afterwards that, in spite of the shot, the beast had lashed at the buck with his tail and had taken a piece of the skin off. Then, on the other side of the river, a crocodile's eye and part of the head appeared above the surface in deep water. I fired at this, but the width of the river at this point was considerable, and I missed. At the time I thought it was a second crocodile, but it was evidently the same one.

By this time the buck had collapsed, and, after firing another shot or two into the water as a precaution, I sent men in, and they dragged the carcase out. I cut off the head, and made the natives drag the body high up the bank so that it might be safe from attack, and then went on to the camp, which was not far distant. On arrival there, I sent back some men to fetch the meat, and after some time they returned and reported that the crocodile had come out of the river and devoured the buck. Presumably he had merely dragged the body into the water and hidden it in some hole.

Victory therefore rested with the crocodile; but I had my revenge. When we reached the camp where this had occurred, on our return journey from the Lorian, I went out after lunch in the heat of the day in the hope of seeing the crocodile, and found him lying asleep, with his mouth wide open, on the opposite side of the river. A well-placed shot at the base of the neck stretched him lifeless. He was less than 10 feet long, but the girth was $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. This was the largest crocodile

which I saw while we were on the river; but the brutes were evidently accustomed to prey on the game when coming to drink, and were dangerous in consequence. This one, when cut open, was found to be full of meat which the negroes identified as impala, and Abdu said the stench was insupportable. I was not at the operation.

On the day that we spent at the swamp one of the porters was attacked and mauled by a crocodile. We were encamped at the place where the river enters the swamp. The river at this point is comparatively narrow, and the water is shallow, much of the water having apparently gone underground. In the morning I forded the river and hunted the country on the right bank in the vicinity of the swamp. The weather was hot, and I had tried to ride the mule across; but the water was fairly deep under the right bank, and the bank was steep, and I had been compelled to dismount in the water and send the mule back. I hunted until 11 a.m. without success, having seen a good bush-buck, but not, so far as I remember, any other game. I then returned to camp, and, after fording the river, had some breakfast and sat in my camp-chair under an acacia-tree on the river-bank and went to sleep. The river at this time was full of negroes who were bathing and splashing and enjoying themselves. All but two of the men had, as I was subsequently informed, left the water, when a crocodile seized one of them by the hand and wrist and dragged him from the shallows into the deeper water under the right

bank. The man, when seized, uttered an appalling yell, which awakened me and roused the whole camp. He was a big, powerful man, and in the deeper water under the right bank he recovered his feet and tried to climb up the bank. A regular tug of war followed between him and the crocodile, which must have been a comparatively small one, as the man held his own fairly well in the struggle, yelling with agony and fear all the time. The water, even under the right bank, was not more than four or five feet deep, but the crocodile kept under water and did not show itself. The other negro, who was in the water, fled in terror when his comrade was seized. I shouted for my rifle, but, just as Saasita put the ·450 into my hand, one of the Askaris fired his Martini. The shot nearly hit the man, but had the effect of making the crocodile let go, and the man crawled up the bank. His hand, wrist, and a great part of the forearm was terribly crushed and mangled and presented a gruesome spectacle. The man was a Wakamba; and, after some more shots had been fired into the water to frighten away the crocodile, my mule attendant, who was also a Wakamba, waded across the river and fetched the man back. The man's forearm was in a dreadful state, and Gimlette proposed to amputate it. At first the man would not hear of this, but after two days gangrene set in, and he then agreed, merely stipulating that he might be allowed as long a stump as possible. The man was put under an anæsthetic; and Gimlette, with some assistance from Abdu, amputated the forearm below the elbow

very sucessfully. The portion amputated was buried, but as soon as the man came to he asked what had been done with it ; and on hearing that it had been buried, he insisted upon it being dug up again. Apparently he was afraid that he might follow it below ground. He was, however, a gallant fellow and behaved very well, marching along daily, with his arm bandaged and an umbrella over his head, until we reached Nairobi.

As his employer, I felt that I had some responsibility, and on arrival at Nairobi, at the suggestion of Colonel Montgomery, the Land Commissioner, who was an old friend of mine, I took the man to the District Officer, and requested him to decide what I ought to do under the circumstances. By the custom of the Wakamba, the loss of an arm must be compensated for by a payment of a certain number of cattle. As I pointed out, however, I had not asked the porter to go into the water. On the contrary, I had repeatedly warned the porters of the danger they were in, when bathing and fishing, from attacks by crocodiles, although, until this accident occurred, no one of us had appreciated the full extent of the danger. The District Officer recognised the force of this contention, and asked the man what compensation he required for the injury, and the man himself assessed the amount at thirty rupees. I gave him fifty rupees, and he departed apparently well satisfied.

The man's forearm, as he crawled up the bank, was a horrible sight ; and after this catastrophe we all avoided the river, and only entered the water when it was necessary. On our return

journey, however, from the Lorian we had another mishap, which was caused by direct disregard of instructions on the part of one of the porters.

When we arrived at the camp near which he had wounded the elephant Gimlette sent a search-party with Mabruki across the river to look for the animal, and also crossed the river himself, and hunted on the right bank. There was a ford near the camp by which all crossed safely, and the negroes were warned not to approach the water at any other point. In the course of the day, however, one of the porters, becoming thirsty, disregarded the warning and went to the river to drink. He did not actually enter the water, but was lifting water with his hand to drink, when a crocodile seized him and pulled him in. This also appears to have been a small crocodile, as, according to Abdu's account of the occurrence, which was based on statements made by the porters, the crocodile got on top of the man and tried to drown him. The negroes, who saw the occurrence, raised a hue and cry, frightened the crocodile away, and effected a rescue. The man had some severe flesh-wounds on his chest and other parts of the body, but his limbs were uninjured, and his injuries were, therefore, much less serious than the injury sustained by the Wakamba. The man was, however, a Kikuyu, and was a poor-spirited and surly creature, and caused us much trouble and anxiety. His wounds were treated, and he was carried for some days. When he had sufficiently recovered he was told that he must walk, and was placed under the charge of one of the Askaris. The man was

sulky and would not exert himself, and the Askari left him and went to the place where we had established the standing camp, which was, as he thought, our destination. We halted, however, short of the place, and the Askari turned up at the tents late in the evening without the man. It was an unpleasant predicament, as, if anything had happened to the man we should doubtless have been blamed. The early part of the night was pitch dark, but at one o'clock the moon rose, and we sent out a rescue party, promising the men a reward if they should find him and bring him in. He was found not far from our camp, having made himself comfortable for the night, with a small thorn-hedge round him. After this he was carried for some days more; and, when he was again ordered to walk, he deserted as soon as he reached the first Meru village.

The late Major Welby, in his interesting book, *'Twixt Sardar and Menelek*, says that, in his journey from Abyssinia to Khartum, he and his men crossed many streams and rivers, which were full of crocodiles, and that one of their sheep only was taken. "My own opinion," he says, "is that, in entering water overrun with alligators, the chances are highly in favour of coming out again in safety." Major Welby was fortunate, and we may have been unfortunate, in our experiences; but I certainly would not recommend anyone to put his theory to the test on the lower reaches of the Guaso Nyiro River.

I shot my two buffaloes without difficulty. Tagarru, though he had no fear of a rhinoceros,

had a great respect for a buffalo. Shortly after he entered my service he said to me one day: "How many bullets you shoot buffalo?" I replied that, if he would get me a good shot, I hoped to be able to do so with one bullet. Tagarru scouted the idea, and said rather scornfully: "Ten bullets." I said nothing, but when the time came I made good my word. I was hunting one evening, on our way to the Lorian, with my two gun-bearers, and we were returning to camp along the left bank of the river, which was at this point high above the stream, and was free from cover. Both the gun-bearers were a little in advance of me, and they saw a bull-buffalo drinking on the other bank of the stream. They beckoned me, and I had a steady shot with the ·450 at the buffalo, which was quite unconscious of our presence. He was standing at an acute angle in the water, so that his stern was nearer to me than his head, and to find his heart I was obliged to shoot him in the side; but I judged well, and the shot inflicted a mortal wound. As I fired, the buffalo galloped off; and, much to Tagarru's indignation, I did not fire the second barrel. I ought to have fired, as African animals possess wonderful vitality, but I thought that I had shot straight and did not do so. "He will get away," said Tagarru excitedly in Swahili. "Hapana kwenda [he will not go]," said Saasita, and the confidence which the remark implied was pleasing to me. Saasita was right, and in a few seconds a moaning bellow, which reached us from the other side of the river, showed that the bull was down. In the morning we crossed the river with some of

the porters and found that he was quite dead. Tagarru's respect for me increased considerably after this incident.

I shot my second buffalo actually in the Lorian swamp. I was hunting in the swamp in the hope of seeing elephants, and while we were in the high reeds we nearly ran into a rhino, which was covered from his head to his tail with white marsh-birds, which were evidently feeding on the ticks. We avoided the rhino and sought more open ground, as hunting in the reeds was both uncomfortable and dangerous; and in a small clearing in the swamp we saw two buffalo bulls. I examined them carefully with the glasses and saw that their heads were not better than the head of the bull I had previously shot, and was not disposed to attack. Then, while we were watching, the bulls separated; one turned off to the right, and the other walked slowly, with his back towards us, in the direction of the impenetrable swamp. It was a tempting opportunity, and we gave chase, Tagarru having the ·350 and I the big rifle. It was a strange stalk. The buffalo walked slowly and unconcernedly on, and we pursued, walking on the animal's near side, Tagarru momentarily looking at me in expectation that I would open fire. But I was in no hurry: the buffalo was not alarmed, and our footsteps made no noise upon the grass, so I continued to walk until we were nearly at right angles to the animal, and then I fired at him behind the shoulder. He was badly shaken by the first shot, but did not fall; and, as he moved away to the right, I

fired the second barrel. He then stood, and I put one or two more bullets into him, and he turned and faced us, looking very sick. While I was considering whether it was necessary to fire again or not, Tagarru put a bullet from the ·350 into his chest, and he fell. Tagarru was very pleased with himself; and I think that this shot was partly responsible for the subsequent indiscretion which nearly cost me my life.

Both the bulls I shot had well-shaped, symmetrical heads, the measurement from horn to horn outside at the widest part being 43 inches and 42¼ inches. In the matter of size, however, the heads were not specially remarkable, but a third bull, which Gimlette and I bagged between us, was a very large one, and has a fine head, the measurement from horn to horn outside at the widest part being 46¾ inches.

On the day already referred to, on which the Kikuyu porter was mauled by a crocodile, Gimlette, when hunting on the right bank of the river, saw a large bull-buffalo on the left bank, and put a bullet into him from his ·470 cordite rifle. When I returned to camp he told me of the incident; and, after tiffin, we started to hunt the wounded animal. As a tussle was probable, I unwisely took out the spare ·450 rifle, in addition to my own ·450 and the ·350. Mabruki was away, looking for the wounded elephant, but Gimlette's Swahili gun-bearer was with us, with Gimlette's ·350 magazine-rifle, and also one of the Askaris with his Martini.

We kept along the left bank of the river until we came to the place where Gimlette had fired

at the buffalo; and there, after a little time, we found the track of the wounded animal and blood upon it.

Before we picked up the track, as we were walking along the bank, I nearly trod upon a large cobra. I had a stick in my hand, and was stepping over a fallen palm-tree, when a large brown cobra emerged from under the tree, travelling in the same direction as myself. My foot was descending right on him, when I saw him and he saw me; and, as I drew my foot back, he raised himself very rapidly and sat, with his hood erect, ready to strike. I had the stick, and might, if I had been smart, have broken his neck with it; but I was not prepared to see a cobra in Africa, and was so startled by the apparition that I stood for a second or two on guard. I was very near the snake, and think I was within his striking distance; but he was only eager to get away, and, seizing the opportunity afforded by my inaction, he wriggled rapidly back under the palm-tree and disappeared. He seemed to be a very large cobra; and a few days after this Gimlette killed one, which was three full paces long. In India six feet is supposed to be the maximum length of a cobra.

I always wore leather gaiters as a protection against snakes and thorns; and on the lower reaches of the Guaso Nyiro, when we were in the heart of Equatorial Africa, protection was necessary, as poisonous snakes were numerous.

We followed the track of the buffalo through the forest to a strip of sand on the river-bank, and there from blood, which was on a small bush

actually on the water's edge, it appeared that the buffalo had entered the water. We naturally supposed that the animal had crossed the river; and, as the depth of the water at this point was uncertain, we were disposed to abandon the pursuit. The buffalo, as we correctly surmised from the appearance of the blood, was wounded in the stomach only, and it was impossible to say to what distance he might have travelled. We had been hunting, with an interval for breakfast, since the early morning; the sun was hot, and our big rifles were heavy, and we sat down on the sand, while the gun-bearers reconnoitred the ground. I personally thought the hunt was over, and so, I think, did Gimlette; but presently a tremendous fusillade commenced upon our left. The buffalo had entered the river; but, after a bath, had returned to the left bank lower down, and there the negroes found him standing in the jungle. The number of rifles and cartridges they had with them made them bold; and hoping to distinguish themselves, or thinking they would have some fun on their own account, they opened fire, Gimlette's Swahili gun-bearer, who afterwards paid the penalty of his rashness, firing the first shot. The cartridges in the magazines of the two ·350 rifles, the two barrels of the ·470, and the Martini of the Askari were all discharged, and the stern of the buffalo was well peppered; but negroes are not, as a rule, good shots, and they were firing into forest, and there was not one well-placed bullet.

When the shooting commenced I thought at first that the men had come across a crocodile,

but the continued firing could not be accounted for in this way. Snatching up my ·450, therefore, I ran to investigate; and, at the end of the strip of sand, I saw the men peering with rather scared faces into the jungle, and knew at once that they must have found the buffalo. "Where is he?" I said, as I came up. Tagarru took one more look, and said, "Coming," and then bolted for the river, and the buffalo burst from the jungle in a determined charge. I was not more than 30 yards from the edge of the jungle and was standing in the middle of the strip of sand right in his track, and he headed straight for me.

Saasita and the Askari ran with Tagarru to the river-bank, and the Swahili gun-bearer bolted past me, but at the time I was unable to take in these details, as my attention was riveted on the buffalo, who looked huge, and was charging at full gallop. I was, however, prepared, and fired a soft-nosed bullet at his head from the right barrel of the ·450 when he was about 25 yards from me. His head was lowered to his chest, so that the forehead was protected, but the bullet struck him fair on the horny substance between the horns. It produced, however, absolutely no effect, and he did not even falter in his stride.

I had read a story of a British officer who, with his wife and a gun-bearer, was charged by a buffalo somewhere in Africa. Turning to run, one of them tripped and they all fell, and while they were helpless on the ground the buffalo charged over them and did not return. The story suggested an idea; and, as my days of running and dodging were over, I had made up my mind

to try this method of avoiding a charge if the necessity should arise.

In two strides the buffalo was upon me, and from the left barrel of the ·450 I fired a solid nickel-coated bullet into his head at five yards' distance, and, as I fired, flung myself instantaneously on the ground to the left. There was a moment of appalled expectation, and then I realised that the immediate danger must be over. Raising my head cautiously from the ground, I saw the buffalo, as I thought, on his knees trying to rise. As a fact, he was pummelling the Swahili, whom he had overtaken after passing over my body. Tagarru and the others shouted to me to join them, and, picking up my rifle, I ran to the river-bank. This was steeper than I anticipated, and I fell into the river. The Askari, who was a big, powerful negro, and who had, like the others, lost his head, flung his arms round me, and I had some difficulty in freeing myself. When I had done so, I reloaded, and they pointed out the buffalo, which had left the Swahili, and was standing with his stern towards us, less than 50 yards away. Firing from the water, I put two bullets into his flank, but he was evidently very sick and did not move. Having satisfied myself that the rifle was all right, I got out of the water, walked up to the buffalo, and put a bullet into his shoulder and toppled him over.

Subsequent examination showed that the soft-nosed bullet had penetrated the animal's head to a considerable distance, and the solid bullet had fractured his skull, and a stick could be passed through the hole into the brain cavity. The two

bullets were within a fraction of an inch of each other in the centre of the animal's head.

Blood from the wounds on the stern of the buffalo fell upon my neck and shoulders as the animal passed over me ; and as he came straight for me and I flung myself to my full length to the left, it would appear that the gallant beast, notwithstanding the tremendous shock he must have received from the second bullet, must have altered his course and made a lunge at me as I disappeared.

I was quite uninjured, as, although I had flung myself down with great violence, the sand was soft, and I was, not unnaturally, well pleased with myself. I had shot straight, and had evaded the buffalo with great dexterity. The Swahili gun-bearer was very badly bruised about the back, and was unable to do any more work during the remainder of the journey. Fortunately for him, one of the buffalo's horns was broken and the other was not sharp. The animal also must have been very dazed at the time. The man's injuries, therefore, were not so serious as they might have been.

Making over charge of the buffalo to Gimlette, I returned to camp for some refreshment, and there I found the man who had been mauled by the crocodile, who was groaning and moaning. There was blood on my neck and shoulders, so that it looked as if I had been injured, and exaggerated rumours as to the injury sustained by the gun-bearer had reached the camp. Even Abdu was disquieted, but I cheered him up by saying : " It is all right, we have done with the buffaloes and the crocodiles now, and have got to begin with

GIMLETTE'S BUFFALO (BOS CAFFER).

the lions." Abdu was amused at this sally, and I heard him retailing it to the negroes around, who roared with laughter.

Tagarru was contrite, and I made it clear to him that there was to be no more shooting in future without an express order from me. To give him his due, he accepted the situation, and loyally complied with my wishes in the future. Many sportsmen in Africa appear to allow their gun-bearers to shoot freely, and the practice is both inconvenient and dangerous. At any moment a man may run into danger, and it is hardly fair to a gun-bearer to expect him to accompany you unarmed. The question of shooting had, therefore, to be adjusted tactfully in accordance with circumstances.

The remark which I made in jest to Abdu proved to be correct, and we had no more adventures after this with either buffaloes or crocodiles.

One of our camps on the Guaso Nyiro was a very fortunate one for me. I had heard that there were some lesser kudu on the river, and was particularly anxious to shoot a good specimen of this beautiful antelope, but for several days after we left the Marsobit crossing we were unable to find any tracks of this animal. On one morning, when we were about half-way to the swamp, we were passing through bush of a kind I had not before seen, and Tagarru pointed out tracks of kudu, and shortly afterwards he saw one of the animals. We hunted unsuccessfully for some time; and, feeling tired, I mounted my mule. A short time after this we came upon a young kudu buck. He gave one look at us and vanished;

and, although I dismounted and seized the ·450 as quickly as I could, I was unable to get a shot. He had not a good head, but at the time it appeared doubtful if I should see any better specimen, and I was ruminating rather sadly over the situation with the rifle in my hand. Suddenly there was a scramble and a rush, and a really fine kudu buck, realising that his companion had gone, dashed out of a clump of bush and stood for a moment, at about 150 yards' distance from me, looking to see from which direction danger threatened. I rapidly took aim and fired from a standing position, and the buck dashed off, but fell dead after going for a few yards, shot through the heart. The length of the horns straight (25 inches) is good, but the horns do not measure well round the spiral.

After this I saw no more kudu, though Gimlette came across them twice, and shot a fair specimen. When we were on our return journey I started from camp early on the day on which we passed through the bush in which I had shot the kudu, and hunted carefully in the hope of coming across another buck. I had no success, however; the camping ground was near, and the leading porters were passing us, when Tagarru saw some impala in the bend of the river on our left. We wanted meat for food, so I proceeded to stalk them. A rhino, which wandered across our path while we were stalking the impala, caused some delay; but the impala did not move, and I eventually got within range of a buck. He was standing with his back towards me, and the distance was about 200 yards, but he was not

absolutely end on, and I thought that I could hit him with the telescope-sight. I accordingly sat down and took the shot, and the bullet struck the buck on the flank near the buttocks. He staggered away, and I saw that he was done for, and was rising to my feet, when Tagarru whispered : "Stop, stop!" I sat down again, and found myself directly facing another buck which was standing quite close to the place from which the wounded buck had moved away. His horns were thrown back over his shoulders, and, like the kudu, he was looking for danger. The horns were not fully visible, but there was something about the appearance of the head which showed me that the animal was an exceptionally fine one, and I fired immediately at his chest. He fell to the shot, and directly I walked up to him I saw that I had secured a prize. The horns are $31\frac{5}{8}$ inches long, and the spread from tip to tip is $18\frac{1}{4}$ inches. His head is the record which has been shot up to date, though one shot by Mr. Judd approaches it very closely. The bagging of a record head is, of course, a fluke; but it adds to the pleasure of a hunt to know that you have secured fine representative specimens of the animals you have hunted and slain.

The other buck required a second bullet to put him out of pain. He also had one of the four heads referred to before in this chapter, though, if I remember right, his head was the smallest of the four.

After crossing the Guaso Nyiro near the road to Marsobit, on our return journey from the Lorian, I shot a fairly good Baisa Oryx bull with

horns 31⅜ inches in length, the best of the two shot previously having horns of 30¼ inches only. My oryx heads were not, therefore, particularly good, but they make handsome trophies.

In the country near the Tana River I stalked and shot a fine eland bull with heavy, well-shaped, and well-marked horns, 26 inches long and 11½ inches in circumference round the base. This stalk was the best piece of work Tagarru put in. We saw a herd of eland in the distance, and Tagarru, by a careful examination with the glasses, saw that the bull was lying down within shot of a deep, dry water-course, his exact position being marked by a tree. We accordingly made a long detour, struck the water-course, and followed it as far as the tree. I then crawled carefully up the bank and found the bull lying down. He was directly facing me, and the distance was about 200 yards. While I was trying to adjust myself on the ground, so as to get a good aim at his neck, the bull became suspicious and rose to his feet, offering me an easy shot at his chest. I had the telescope-sight and took the shot at once, and killed him with a single bullet from the .350. With a high-velocity rifle the shot in the chest is a very deadly one.

I cannot be sure as to the place in which I shot the wild dog, but think it was in the country between Nyeri and Embu. My memory is clear as to the incident. The negroes with me said that they heard the cry of some animal in distress, and ran forward. They came upon some hunting-dogs, but if there was any other animal the dogs must have completely devoured it in a few seconds.

as no traces of it could be found. I shot a good dog, which was attacked almost immediately by one of the others. I had a shot at the assailant, but both dogs were in high grass and I missed. Both dogs then bolted, and I followed up the wounded one, which was badly crippled, and finished it off.

I shot two wildebeest bulls in the country near the Tana river, one of which had a very fine head. These animals reside in the open plains, and, except in large private estates, where the animals are preserved, the herds have been often fired at and are not easily approached. It is not easy, therefore, to bag a wildebeest, outside of a reserve, by fair stalking.

The first bull I killed had not a very good head, but the shot with which I killed him was, for me at any rate, an exceptionally fine one. The bull had attached himself to a herd of hartebeest, and I had tried unsuccessfully to get a shot; but the herd was wary, and the animals disappeared in the distance. They evidently, however, ran into something which frightened them more than I had done, as before long they came tearing back at a gallop, and passed me at about 150 yards' distance, with the wildebeest bull bringing up the rear. They crossed me from left to right, which is the shot I most fancy, and with the right barrel of the ·450 I made a bull's-eye, shooting the wildebeest as he was galloping at his best speed through the heart. He galloped on, and I missed him with the left barrel; but, after going for some distance, he collapsed in a cloud of dust, quite dead.

After this I made several attempts to stalk wildebeest without success. On one occasion I had a shot at a fine bull, head on, at a distance which I estimated to be 500 yards. The shot apparently passed through, or perhaps grazed, his shoulder, as he reared straight on end like a horse. I followed that bull for a long distance, but was unable to bag him. He limped a little, but was evidently not seriously wounded.

At last I got a steady shot at the shoulder of a good bull, which was standing incautiously near to cover at the edge of a plain. The distance was not less than 400 yards, but I had a steady shot with the telescope-sight, and when the bull galloped away, apparently uninjured, I felt somewhat mortified. After galloping for a considerable distance, however, he collapsed and fell dead. The soft-nosed bullet, which I fired, had passed right through his body. This bull had a good head, the width outside from horn to horn being 26 inches, compared with the records as given in Rowland Ward's book of 29½ inches.

Gimlette shot every kind of animal that I did, except wildebeest and wild dog. He secured very good specimens of the Gerenuk gazelle, but had not as much luck as I had with the other animals in the matter of heads. The watchful little Gerenuk, with his long, thin neck, is rarely surprised, and, when the animal is facing you at a considerable distance, you have to shoot very straight to inflict a mortal wound.

We had some success with lions, as much perhaps as we could reasonably expect, considering that we trusted entirely to chance encounters

by daylight. We had not the luck to come across any natural kills, and on the Guaso Nyiro we were marching so fast that we had not the time to do any sitting up over baits at night. On the Rupingazi, and in the country near Juja farm, where this method might perhaps have been profitably employed, we ran into the two families of lions which were in occupation.

I have heard of a good bag of lions being made in East Africa by sportsmen who tracked the animals from the plains, where the grass had been recently burnt, to the places where they were lying asleep in the adjoining cover. This appears to me to be the most interesting and sporting method of shooting lions I have ever heard of; but in the part of the country through which we travelled this method would not have been practicable.

Most of the good bags of lions which have been made in recent years have, I think, been made by the use of horses. Good light-weight riders gallop any lion which may be sighted in the open plain in the early morning. The lion, when he finds that he is outpaced, stands at bay, and the sportsman or sportsmen come up and shoot him. Dogs also are naturally very useful. This appears to have been the manner in which the Assyrians hunted, as depicted in the friezes, and then, as now, the method was very successful. Even the large bags of lions which have been recently made in East Africa are dwarfed into insignificance by the noble bag claimed by Tiglath Pileser of 300 lions shot on foot " in the fullness of his manly might," and 800 more shot from his chariot. The

monarch probably took credit for every lion killed by any member of the royal hunting-party, and the figures are evidently round estimates ; but lions appear to have been extraordinarily numerous in Western Asia, and the Assyrian was, as the Bible tells us, a mighty hunter before the Lord. For a battle at close quarters, the Assyrian equipment was probably as effective as modern firearms. The African of to-day shows what can be done with a spear, and an arrow of the kind used by the Assyrians, as depicted in the friezes, must have been a very formidable weapon. A lion is a soft-skinned animal, and an arrow, driven through any part of a lion, would cripple him more than a badly placed shot from a cordite rifle ; and, if driven through the heart, would be quite as effective as a rifle-bullet. Casualties in these combats among the beaters and attendants were doubtless numerous, but this would not disturb the serenity of an Oriental potentate.

Hunting lions with horses in East Africa presupposes, however, the possession of large means. The horses cost considerable sums of money, and, exposed as they are to the risk of accident and to horse-sickness and the tsetse-fly, their tenure of life is very uncertain. The chance encounter, when it does come off, is fine sport, and if you rise early enough in the morning and hunt steadily in lion country, the probabilities are that you will come across one or more of the animals sooner or later.

While we were in camp on the Guaso Nyiro, on our way to the Lorian, we heard lions roaring finely one night, and on another occasion I saw a

place where several lions had been lying in the sand. The first lion, however, which we saw, was at a place near the swamp. I was hunting with the two gun-bearers, and a lion was sighted, standing in the grass, at a distance from us of about 250 yards. Tagarru wanted me to fire, but only the head was visible, and it was not possible to see exactly how the animal was standing. The shot was therefore a very difficult one, and I decided to try to approach nearer. The lion slunk away, however, in the grass and entered thorn scrub, and we saw nothing more of him. This lion, in all probability, had never seen a man before, black or white, and it was reasonable to suppose that he would have allowed us to approach fairly near; but the instinctive fear of man, which animals possess, caused him to move off.

The next lion we saw was in the country between the Guaso Nyiro and Meru, when we were on our return journey from the Lorian. When you have eaten tough and insipid antelope-meat for several days a succulent guinea-fowl is a gift from the gods; and, having found a place where these birds were abundant, we devoted one morning to a guinea-fowl shoot. We had begun well, and had shot three or four, when we heard a lion grunting not far away. The shot-guns were exchanged for rifles, and we started in pursuit. The grunting continued, and gave us a line, and, as we were following it, I saw a fine-maned lion, about five or six hundred yards away, standing upon some slightly rising ground and looking steadily at us. After gazing at us for some time, he had a look to his right and then to his left, apparently to make sure

that he was not surrounded, and then disappeared in the grass. We followed as fast as we could, but did not see him again. The going was bad, as the ground was covered with small blocks of lava, which were hidden by the grass; but a good rider, well mounted, might have been able to round up that lion and prevent his escape.

I was beginning to fear that the second expedition would be a failure, like the first, and that no lion would be bagged; but the chance came. When we were marching down the Rupingazi River, after leaving Embu, I was hunting one morning with the two gun-bearers in a large grassy plain with no cover. Gimlette, who was on the river, fired a shot, and at the noise a lion raised his head above the grass, and Tagarru, who was scanning the horizon with the glasses at the time, saw him. Further examination revealed the presence also of two lionesses. I was not with the men at the moment, and when I joined them Tagarru imparted the news with a beaming face, and we started in pursuit. Either Tagarru was quite wrong in the information he gave me as to the distance, or the lion must have moved towards us in the grass, as, before I had taken the ·450 in my hand, the lion jumped up before me in the grass and cantered off. I seized the rifle, but, before I could fire, he disappeared over the crest of the slope. The plain, as is usually the case in East Africa, was not perfectly flat, but was a series of undulating slopes. On reaching the crest of the slope, I could see the head of the lion, who was standing in the grass about 250 yards away. Hoping to force him to stand, I fired at him with

the ·350, using the telescope-sight. It was a difficult shot, as I could not sit down, and had to fire from a standing position, and I missed. The lion then moved off at a fast swinging walk, and was joined by the two lionesses. I had two shots at them, as they moved off, with the rifle sighted for 300 yards, but without success; and then, accompanied by the gun-bearers, I started in pursuit. The lions travelled faster than I was able to do, but the larger of the two lionesses stopped at intervals and looked round, as if she was disposed to fight it out, and this encouraged me to persevere. When we had pursued them for a considerable distance, Saasita divined that the lions were making for a conical hill in the middle of the plain; and, when they disappeared over the brow of the next slope, we made straight for the hill and thereby gained a good deal of ground. As I ascended the slope, I caught a glimpse of an animal disappearing round the corner of the hill, and the larger of the two lionesses stood for some seconds on the side of the hill, offering me a good shot at about 300 yards' distance. Thinking that the rifle was still sighted for 300 yards, I sat down and had two shots at her with the ·350 before she disappeared round the hill; but the bullets struck very short, and I found, upon examination, that the rifle was sighted for 100 yards only. Either the sight had slipped back during the pursuit, or I had altered it myself and had forgotten the fact in my excitement.

I halted for a minute or two to reload the ·350 and recover my wind, as we had walked very fast, and then we walked round the corner of the hill

and began to ascend it. Almost immediately the lion showed himself high up on the hill, and began to walk round the top. He was a long way off, but he checked for a moment, and I sat down and put up the 400 yards sight and had a steady shot at him.

"You hit him," said Tagarru triumphantly; and I myself heard the welcome thud which a bullet makes when it strikes flesh. The lion disappeared round the top of the hill, and, while I was looking in his direction, Tagarru excitedly called out, "Take big gun, take big gun." I looked round and saw the larger of the two lionesses, which had jumped up at the shot, moving slowly away. When she was 130 or 140 yards from us she stopped and half-turned, and looked at us over her shoulder. She offered a good mark, and I fired at her, from a standing position, with the ·450 and put a bullet through her heart. After some convulsive struggles she collapsed and fell.

"Good shot!" said Tagarru, and shook hands with me warmly. Saasita stood by my side with nothing in his hand, while I fired this shot, which might easily have been followed by a charge, but he was perfectly steady and showed no sign of fear. Tagarru, also, behaved very well. The lioness appeared to be quite dead; but, to make sure, I had a shot at her as she lay on the ground with the ·350 without the telescope-sight, and, as we subsequently found, missed her clean. The two rifles were sighted differently; and, as I almost always used the ·350 with the telescope-sight, I had not up to that time discovered this.

The lioness was, however, quite dead, and we

walked to the top of the hill and descended slowly, looking for the lion. The gun-bearers soon saw him lying on the slope of the hill, with his head on the ground facing in our direction. If we had followed him round the hill there might have been trouble, as we should probably have been below him. As it was, we were about 100 yards above him, and had therefore the advantage of position. I saw a yellow patch, but could not make out the head, and should not myself have known that it was the lion. Both the men, however, were very confident, and I put a bullet from the ·450 into the yellow patch. The shot struck the lion in the back near the neck and passed out of the body near the tail, and, as he raised himself with a roar, I fired a second shot and knocked him over.

The direction of the first shot from the ·350 was excellent, but it was too high. If the rifle had been properly sighted I believe that the shot would have killed the lion. The rifle was sighted for 400 yards, and the distance, which I paced on the following day, was 300 yards. As it was, the lion was evidently badly crippled by the shot. I saw nothing of the second lioness, but the men said that she escaped over the hill.

I left Saasita on the spot, with the ·450 rifle, to skin the lions, and went on to the camp with Tagarru. On arrival there I told Gimlette what had happened and then sat down to have some breakfast. Then, according to his account, I became very quiet and suddenly asked, "Where am I?" He said, "You are here, on the Rupingazi River, and have just shot two lions"; but I had absolutely no recollection of the incident.

For nearly three hours, as he said, I talked incoherently, and then my brain cleared and I was all right again. Thinking I had been to sleep, I called for tea and said that I was going to the place where I had shot the lion. When he informed me that I had not been well I asked what had been the matter. An attack of amnesia had been induced by the exertion and the excitement.

I continued shooting, and, so far as I was able to see, there were no after-effects of any kind, though for the rest of the tour I purposely refrained from exerting myself quite as strenuously as I had done up to this time. If Colonel Gimlette had not been with me, I should not have known that I had had a temporary loss of memory.

In the morning I went back to the spot, paced the distances, and verified my impressions. Saasita skinned the lions very well, and on the following morning he and Abdu proceeded to peg out the skins in the sun. I objected to this, as a tiger-skin, when pegged out in the sun in India, will inevitably go bad; but Abdu insisted that it was the right thing to do for one day, and, as I had great faith in his intelligence, I withdrew my objection. He was perfectly right, and both the skins arrived in England in very good order. The sun in Africa has not apparently the same power as the sun in India.

We came across lions on one other occasion. We had crossed the Tana, and were traversing the country near Juja farm, when Gimlette met a Boer farmer, who said that he was suffering much from malarial fever. Gimlette gave him some quinine, for which he was very grateful, saying

quaintly, "God bless you, my dear!" He then gave a more substantial proof of his gratitude by informing Gimlette that there were lions in the neighbourhood, and that, if we hunted for a day or two, we should probably come across them. Either on that afternoon, or on the following day, Gimlette and his men did run into the lions, a lioness and two nearly full-grown cubs, a lion and a lioness; Gimlette had a snap-shot at the old lioness as she disappeared round a small mound. One of his men also came upon the lion, which made a demonstration but moved off without actually attacking them.

We encamped near the place, and in the morning, before dawn, heard the lions roaring. We rose early and went in pursuit, and came upon them before the sun was up in a small, dry, wooded ravine, which connected with the broken ground and jungle on the bank of the stream, forming the boundary of Juja estate.

The lioness was standing in cover in the bed of the ravine, and offered a difficult shot at about 200 yards' distance. With the telescope-sight I think I could have hit her if I had sat down and taken a shot; but it was Gimlette's turn, and, at his request, I refrained from firing. The lioness then walked out of the ravine up the bank, and, as the sun had just risen, she stood there with the light shining on her skin, offering a very tempting shot. The distance was, however, considerable, and Gimlette always fired from a standing position. He took the shot and missed, and the lioness moved off. We followed her, but could not see her again; and, while we were on the left

bank of the ravine in pursuit of the lioness, some negroes, who had followed us from the camp, saw the two cubs pass behind us down the ravine.

Gimlette was very lame, having had trouble with a jigger, and the situation appeared to be hopeless; but the sequel showed what may be achieved by perseverance, even when the odds are heavily against one.

I took the right bank of the ravine and Gimlette took the left, which was the side near to the broken ground and jungle on the bank of the stream, and we worked slowly down the ravine. The lions were unusually bold, and there was good cover in the ravine for some distance, so they made no great hurry to escape, and moved along slowly in front of us through the thick cover. As it approached the stream the ravine became wider and the cover was not so good, and the lions left the ravine and made for the broken ground and cover fringing the stream. They were within shot of Gimlette while they did this, and, as they were walking through some high grass, he fired and put a bullet into the lioness. The two young ones than galloped away, and Gimlette fired at them, but without effect. The lioness, on being wounded, went into a small, dense thicket, which was close by on the edge of the ravine, and there remained. Hearing the firing, I crossed the ravine and found Gimlette watching the thicket. There appeared to be no possibility of driving the lioness out, and Gimlette, who was determined not to allow her to escape, decided to follow her into the thicket. It was a most hazardous undertaking, but Mabruki, very pluckily, made no demur;

and Gimlette and he crawled into the thicket, Gimlette having the ·470 and Mabruki the ·350, while I waited outside to shoot the lioness if she should bolt out. Mabruki saw the lioness crouching in the thick cover, but Gimlette could not make her out, and accordingly ordered Mabruki to fire. He put a bullet into her chest with the ·350 ; and, as she rose with a roar, Gimlette knocked her over with a shot from the big rifle. It was an anxious wait for me outside, but the sounds which reached me from the thicket were reassuring, and before long I was relieved to see them both emerge triumphant.

This was the end of the day's sport, but on the following morning we again rose early and hunted the same ground in the hope of coming across the young lion and lioness. Before we had gone far Gimlette had an attack of malarial fever, and was obliged to return to camp, and I therefore hunted alone, with the two gun-bearers, along the edge of the plain which adjoined the broken ground and jungle on the bank of the stream. One of the men saw the lions in the distance returning from the plain to the jungle. The lioness was leading, and was travelling fast, while the lion followed more leisurely. We hastened in pursuit, but the going was bad, and it was impossible to walk very fast. We came up with the lion, however, while he was making his way up the side of a small dry ravine which connected with the broken ground. "There he sit," cried Tagarru excitedly, and the sound of his voice probably put the lion on his guard, as, when he reached the level ground at the top of the ravine, he stood behind a large

tree. It was most tantalising. The distance was not more than 150 yards; the lion was broadside on, and I could see his nose on one side of the trunk of the tree and a bit of his stern on the other. I was shooting well at the time, and with a little bit of luck there would have been another lion in the bag; but it was not to be. After standing for a few seconds, he gave a "Wouf," and started at a gallop for the jungle. If he had given me a crossing shot I might have hit him, but he galloped straight away from me, which is a shot I do not like, and I missed him. Before I could fire the second barrel he entered the thick cover. We followed him for some distance into the cover, but saw nothing more of him.

"There he sit" was a favourite formula of Tagarru's, and it misled me much at the outset of the expedition, until I learned by experience that it merely meant "There he is!" If he had not spoken, we should have had a better chance of bagging the lion.

After this we made our way to Nairobi, and Gimlette left the country.

After spending some days at Nairobi with my friends, the late Mr. Currie and his wife, I went by train, with a few porters, to Muhoroni, on the west of the Rift Valley and not far from the Victoria Nyanza, to shoot Jackson's hartebeest and roan. It was pleasant country, and I had some nice shooting, bagging good specimens of Jackson's hartebeest and also good topi, and a very good oribi. I failed, however, to get a roan. They were not numerous, and were very wary, and I was unable to get a shot except at a great dis-

tance. I brought a good bull to his knees with a shot at an enormous distance, which I estimated to be 500 yards; but he was apparently creased only, as he recovered himself and went off with the herd, and was evidently not seriously injured. I had one other difficult shot, which I remember, but this also was unsuccessful. Hyænas were numerous in this part of the country, but I did not see any of the nobler carnivora.

I saw very few Thomsonii and Grantii gazelles in this expedition; and the water-buck and Coke's hartebeest, which I shot, were inferior to those which I shot on the occasion of my first visit to Africa. The illustration at the end of the volume shows the trophies of the expedition.

From Muhoroni I returned to Nairobi by train, and shortly afterwards went to Mombassa and took ship for England. While I was at Nairobi Mr. Sandiford, the Locomotive Superintendent of the Uganda Railway, whom I had known in former days at Lahore, told me an extraordinary leopard story. His house was in the middle of the town, or, as we should call it in India, the Station, of Nairobi, and a leopard, finding himself benighted in the Station, jumped on to the sill of an open window and entered the house. By great good fortune it passed from the room into which it had first entered into a disused bedroom, which had a barred window, and there took refuge under the bed. Miss Sandiford missed a tame cat, and went through the house looking for it, and saw the leopard under the bed. With much presence of mind, she quietly closed the door and withdrew and told her father. He was at first incredulous,

but when he opened the door of the room and peeped in he also saw the leopard. A man with a rifle was sent for; and when he arrived, the leopard, realising that it was trapped, dashed savagely at the window. It could not, however, escape, and was shot in the room.

I was between fifty-five and fifty-six years of age when I made this expedition to Africa, but, from the sportsman's point of view, I was at my best. I walked well, shot well, and my nerve was good. In subsequent shooting expeditions, both in the matter of walking and shooting, I was conscious of deterioration. I may have done too much, and I certainly worked very hard; but I thoroughly enjoyed myself, and the memories of this expedition are particularly pleasant.

FINIS

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THE BAG ON THE AUTHOR'S SECOND AFRICAN EXPEDITION.

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